

SWISS FAMILY ROBINSON



**CHILDREN'S BAPTIST HOME
OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA**

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The kangaroo was added to our already heavy load, and we proceeded slowly, arriving late at Falconhurst, but meeting with the usual bright welcome.

The Swiss Family Robinson

BY
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CHAPTER I

THE WRECK

For many days we had been tempest-tossed. Six times had the darkness closed over a wild and terrific scene, and returning light as often brought but renewed distress, for the raging storm increased in fury until on the seventh day all hope was lost.

We were driven completely out of our course; no conjecture could be formed as to our whereabouts. The crew had lost heart, and were utterly exhausted by incessant labor.

The riven masts had gone by the board, leaks had been sprung in every direction, and the water, which rushed in, gained upon us rapidly.

My heart sank as I looked round upon my family in the midst of these horrors. Our four young sons were overpowered by terror. "Dear children," said I, "if the Lord will, He can save us even from this fearful peril; if not, let us calmly yield our lives into His hand, and think of the joy and blessedness of finding ourselves forever and ever united in that happy home above."

At these words my weeping wife looked bravely up, and, as the boys clustered round her, she began to cheer and encourage them with calm and loving words.

Amid the roar of the thundering waves I suddenly heard the cry of "Land, land!" while at the same instant the ship struck with a frightful shock, which threw everyone to the deck, and seemed to threaten her immediate destruction. Then the voice of the captain was heard above the tumult, shouting, "Lower away the boats! We are lost!"

"Lost!" I exclaimed, and the word went like a dagger to my heart; but seeing my children's terror renewed, I composed myself, calling out cheerfully, "Take courage, my boys! We are all above water yet. There is the land not far off; let us do our best to reach it. You know God helps those that help themselves!" With that I left them and went on deck. What was my horror when through the foam and spray I beheld the only remaining boat leave the ship, the last of the seamen spring into her and push off, regardless of my cries and entreaties that we might be allowed to share their slender chance of preserving their lives.

Casting my eyes despairingly around, I became gradually aware of a rocky coast, and rugged as it was, my heart bounded toward it as a sign of help in the hour of need. Yet the sense of our forsaken condition weighed heavily upon me as I returned to my family, constraining myself to say, "Courage, dear ones! Although our good ship will never sail

more, she is so placed that our cabin will remain above water, and to-morrow, if the wind and waves abate, I see no reason why we should not be able to get ashore."

My wife perceived my anxiety, in spite of my forced composure, but not for a moment did her courage and trust in Providence forsake her, and on seeing this, my fortitude revived.

"We must find some food, and take a good supper," said she. "We shall require our utmost strength to-morrow."

Night drew on apace, the storm was as fierce as ever, and at intervals we were startled by crashes announcing further damage to our unfortunate ship.

A good meal being now ready, my youngsters ate heartily, and retiring to rest were speedily fast asleep. Fritz, who was of an age to be aware of the real danger we were in, kept watch with us.

At length the faint dawn of day appeared, and with thankful hearts the blue sky was seen above us. I aroused the boys, and we assembled on the remaining portion of the deck.

"The sea will soon be calm enough for swimming," Fritz suggested.

"And that would be all very fine for you," exclaimed Ernest, "but think of mother and the rest of us! Why not build a raft and all get on shore together?"

"We should find it difficult, I think, to make a raft that would carry us safe to shore. However,

we must contrive something, and first let each try to procure what will be of most use to us."

When we re-assembled in the cabin, we all displayed our treasures.

Fritz brought a couple of guns, shot belt, powder flasks, and plenty of bullets.

Ernest produced a cap full of nails, an ax, and a hammer, while pincers, chisels, and augers stuck out of all his pockets.

Little Franz carried a box, and eagerly began to show us the "nice sharp little hooks" it contained. "Well done, Franz!" cried I; "these fish hooks, which you, the youngest, have found, may contribute more than anything else in the ship to save our lives by procuring food for us. Fritz and Ernest, you have chosen well."

"Will you praise me too?" said my dear wife. "I have nothing to show, but I can give you good news. Some useful animals are still alive; a cow, a donkey, two goats, six sheep, a ram, and a fine sow."

"All these things are excellent indeed," said I; "but my friend Jack here has presented me with a couple of huge, hungry, useless dogs, who will eat more than any of us."

"Oh, papa! they will be of use! Why, they will help us to hunt when we get on shore!"

"No doubt they will, if ever we do get on shore, Jack; but I must say I don't know how it is to be done."

"Can't we each get into a big tub, and float

there?" returned he. "I have often sailed splendidly like that, round the pond at home."

"My child, you have hit on a capital idea!" cried I.

We very soon found four large casks, made of sound wood, and strongly bound with iron hoops. They were exactly what I wanted, and I succeeded in sawing them across the middle. I next procured a long, thin plank, on which my tubs could be fixed, and the two ends of this I bent upward so as to form a keel. Other two planks were nailed along the sides of the tubs; they also, being flexible, were brought to a point at each end, and all firmly secured and nailed together. I felt satisfied that in smooth water this craft would be perfectly trustworthy.

Soon our gallant craft was launched. I got in; and turning it toward the most open side of the wreck, I cut and cleared away obstructions, so as to leave a free passage for our departure, and the boys brought oars to be ready for the voyage. This important undertaking we were forced to postpone until the next day, as it was by this time far too late to attempt it.

We rose up betimes, for sleep weighs lightly on the hopeful as well as on the anxious. After kneeling together in prayer, "Now, my beloved ones," said I, "with God's help we are about to effect our escape. Let the poor animals we must leave behind be well fed, and put plenty of fodder within their reach: in a few days we may be able to re-

turn, and save them likewise. After that, collect everything you can think of which may be of use to us."

The boys joyfully obeyed me, and I selected from the large quantity of stores they got together canvas to make a tent, a chest of carpenter's tools, guns, pistols, powder, shot, and bullets, rods and fishing tackle, an iron pot, a case of portable soup, and another of biscuit.

With a hearty prayer for God's blessing, we now began to take our seats, each in his tub. Just then we heard the cocks begin to crow, as though to reproach us for deserting them. "Why should not the fowls go with us?" exclaimed I. "If we find no food for *them*, they can be food for *us*!" Ten hens and a couple of cocks were accordingly placed in one of the tubs, and secured with some wire-netting over them.

The ducks and geese were set at liberty, and took to the water at once, while the pigeons, rejoicing to find themselves on the wing, swiftly made for the shore. My wife, who managed all this for me, kept us waiting for her some little time, and came at last with a bag as big as a pillow in her arms. "This is *my* contribution," she said, throwing the bag to little Franz, to be, as I thought, a cushion for him to sit upon.

All being ready, we cast off, and moved away from the wreck. My good, brave wife sat in the first compartment of the boat; next her was Franz, a pretty little boy, nearly eight years old. Then

came Fritz, a handsome, spirited young fellow of fifteen; the two center tubs contained the valuable cargo; then came our bold, thoughtless Jack; next him Ernest, my second son, intelligent, well-formed, and rather indolent. I myself, the anxious, loving father, stood in the stern, endeavoring to guide the raft with its precious burden to a safe landing-place.

Our passage, though tedious, was safe; but the nearer we approached the shore the less inviting it appeared; the barren rocks seemed to threaten us with misery and want.

Many casks, boxes, and bales of goods floated on the water around us. Fritz and I managed to secure a couple of hogsheads, so as to tow them alongside. With the prospect of famine before us, it was desirable to lay hold of anything likely to contain provisions.

I presently observed an opening, where a stream flowed into the sea, and saw that our geese and ducks were swimming toward this place. I steered after them into the creek, and we found ourselves in a small bay or inlet.

As soon as we could gather our children around us on dry land, we knelt to offer thanks and praise for our merciful escape, and with full hearts we commended ourselves to God's good keeping for the time to come.

All hands then briskly fell to the work of unloading, and oh, how rich we felt ourselves as we did so! The poultry we left at liberty to forage for

themselves, and set about finding a suitable place to erect a tent in which to pass the night. Thrusting a long spar into a hole in the rock, and supporting the other end by a pole firmly planted in the ground, we formed a framework over which we stretched the sailcloth we had brought.

When this was accomplished, the boys ran to collect moss and grass, to spread in the tent for our beds, while I arranged a fire-place with some large flat stones near the brook which flowed close by. Dry twigs and seaweed were soon in a blaze on the hearth; I filled the iron pot with water, and giving my wife several cakes of the portable soup, she established herself as our cook, with little Franz to help her.

Fritz, meanwhile, leaving a loaded gun with me, took another himself, and went along the rough coast to see what lay beyond the stream; this fatiguing sort of walk not suiting Ernest's fancy, he sauntered down to the beach, and Jack scrambled among the rocks, searching for shellfish.

I was anxious to land the two casks which were floating alongside our boat, but found that I could not get them up the bank on which we had landed, and was therefore obliged to look for a more convenient spot. As I did so, I was startled by hearing Jack shouting for help. I hurried toward him with a hatchet in my hand. The little fellow stood screaming in a deep pool, and I saw that a huge lobster had caught his leg in its powerful claw. I waded into the water, and seizing the lobster firmly

by the back, managed to make it loosen its hold, and we brought it safe to land.

On our return, I congratulated Jack on being the first to discover anything useful.

"As to that," said Ernest, "I found something very good to eat, as well as Jack, only I could not get at them without wetting my feet."

"Pooh!" cried Jack, "I know what he saw—nothing but some nasty mussels; I saw them too. Who wants to eat trash like that? Lobster for me!"

"I believe them to be oysters, not mussels," returned Ernest calmly.

"Be good enough, my philosophical young friend, to fetch a few specimens of these oysters in time for our next meal," said I; "we must all exert ourselves, Ernest, for the common good, and pray never let me hear you object to wetting your feet."

"I can bring some salt at the same time," said Ernest. "I remarked a good deal lying in the crevices of the rocks; it tasted very pure and good, and I concluded it was produced by the evaporation of sea water in the sun."

"Extremely probable, learned sir," cried I; "but if you had brought a bagful of this good salt instead of merely speculating so profoundly on the subject, it would have been more to the purpose. Run and fetch some directly."

It proved to be salt sure enough, although so impure that it seemed useless, till my wife dissolved and strained it, when it became fit to put in the soup.

"Now," said my wife, tasting the soup with the stick with which she had been stirring it, "dinner is ready, but where can Fritz be?"

"How are we to eat our soup when he does come?" I asked; "we have neither plates nor spoons, and we can scarcely lift the boiling pot to our mouths."

"Oh, for a few cocoanut shells!" sighed Ernest.

"Oh, for half a dozen plates and as many silver spoons!" rejoined I, smiling.

"Really, though, oysters-shells would do," said he, after a moment's thought.

"True, that is an idea worth having! Off with you, my boys; get the oysters and clean out a few shells." As they returned with a good supply we heard a shout from Fritz in the distance; we returned it joyfully, and he presently appeared before us, his hands behind his back, and a look of disappointment upon his countenance.

"Unsuccessful!" said he.

"Really!" I replied; "never mind, my boy, better luck next time."

"Oh, Fritz!" exclaimed his brothers, who had looked behind him, "a sucking-pig, a little sucking-pig. Where did you get it? How did you shoot it? Do let us see it!"

Fritz then with sparkling eyes exhibited his prize and told us how he had been to the other side of the stream. "So different from this," he said; "it is really a beautiful country, and the shore, which runs down to the sea in a gentle slope,

is covered with all sorts of useful things from the wreck. Do let us go and collect them. And, father, why should we not return to the wreck and bring off some of the animals? Just think of what value the cow would be to us, and what a pity it would be to lose her! Let us get her on shore. and we will move over the stream, where she will have good pasturage, and we shall be in the shade instead of on this desert, and father, I do wish—”

“Stop, stop, my boy!” cried I. “All will be done in good time. To-morrow and the day after will bring work of their own. And tell me, did you see no traces of our shipmates?”

“Not a sign of them, either on land or sea, living or dead,” he replied.

“But the sucking-pig,” said Jack, “where did you get it?”

“It is one of several,” said Fritz, “which I found on the shore. Most curious animals they are; they hopped rather than walked, and every now and then would squat down on their legs and rub their snouts with their fore-paws.”

Meanwhile Ernest had been carefully examining the animal in question.

“This is no pig,” he said; “and except for its bristly skin, does not look like one. See, its teeth are not like those of a pig, but rather those of a squirrel. In fact, your sucking-pig is an agouti.”

“Dear me,” said Fritz; “listen to the great professor lecturing! He is going to prove that a pig is not a pig!”

"You need not be so quick to laugh at your brother," said I, in my turn; "he is quite right. I, too, know the agouti by descriptions and pictures, and there is little doubt that this is a specimen."

While we were thus talking, Jack had been vainly endeavoring to open an oyster with his large knife. "Here is a simpler way," said I, placing an oyster on the fire; it immediately opened.

Our spoons were now soon ready, and gathering round the pot we dipped them in, not, however, without sundry scalded fingers.

By the time supper was over the sun was sinking beneath the horizon: The pigeons flew up to crevices in the rocks, the fowls perched themselves on our tent pole, and the ducks and geese waddled off, cackling and quacking, to the marshy margin of the river. We, too, were ready for repose, and having loaded our guns, and offered up our prayers to God, we commended ourselves to His protecting care, and as the last ray of light departed, closed our tent and lay down to rest.

CHAPTER II

A NEW HOME

"Rouse up, rouse up, my boys," cried I, awakening the children cheerfully. "Come and help your mother to get breakfast ready."

"As to that," said she smiling, "we can but set on the pot and boil some more soup!"

"Why, you forget Jack's fine lobster!" I replied. "It is well the lobster is so large, for we shall want to take part with us on our excursion to-day."

At the mention of an excursion, the four children capered around me, clapping their hands for joy.

"Steady there, steady!" said I, "you cannot expect all to go. Such an expedition as this would be too dangerous and fatiguing for you younger ones. Fritz and I will go alone this time, with one of the dogs, leaving the other to defend you."

Breakfast over, we armed ourselves, each taking a gun and a game bag; Fritz in addition sticking a pair of pistols in his belt, and I a small hatchet in mine. Then having commended ourselves to God's protecting care, I took leave of my wife and children, and bidding them not wander far from the boat and tent, we parted not without some anxiety on either side, for we knew not what might assail us in this unknown region.

We now found that the banks of the stream were on both sides so rocky that we could get down to the water by only one narrow passage, and there was no corresponding path on the other side. I was glad to see this, however, for I now knew that my wife and children were on a comparatively inaccessible spot, the other side of the tent being protected by steep and precipitous cliffs. Fritz and I pursued our way up the stream until we reached a point where the waters fell from a considerable height in a cascade, and where several large rocks lay half covered by the water; by means of these we succeeded in crossing the stream in safety. We thus had the sea on our left, and a long line of rocky heights, here and there adorned with clumps of trees, stretching away inland to the right. On the smooth sand we searched carefully for any trace of our hapless companions, but not the mark of a footstep could we find.

"Shall I fire a shot or two?" said Fritz; "that would bring our companions, if they are within hearing."

"It would indeed," I replied, "or any savages that may be here. No, no; let us search diligently, but as quietly as possible."

Thus talking, we pushed on until we came to a pleasant grove which stretched down to the water's edge; here we halted to rest, seating ourselves under a large tree, by a rivulet which murmured and splashed along its pebbly bed into the great ocean before us. A thousand gayly-plumaged

birds flew twittering above us, and Fritz and I gazed up at them.

My son suddenly started up. "A monkey!" he exclaimed. "I am nearly sure I saw a monkey."

As he spoke he sprang round to the other side of the tree, and stumbled over a round substance, which he handed to me, remarking that it was a round bird's nest, of which he had often heard.

"You may have done so," said I, laughing, "but you need not necessarily conclude that every round hairy thing is a bird's nest; this, for instance, is not one, but a cocoanut."

We split open the nut, but to our disgust found the kernel dry and uneatable.

"Hullo," cried Fritz, "I always thought a cocoanut was full of delicious sweet liquid, like almond milk."

"So it is," I replied, "when young and fresh, but as it ripens the milk becomes congealed, and in course of time is solidified into a kernel."

As cocoanuts must be over-ripe before they fall naturally from the tree, it was not without difficulty that we obtained one in which the kernel was not dried up. When we succeeded, however, we were so refreshed by the fruit that we could defer the repast we called our dinner until later in the day, and so spare our stock of provisions.

Continuing our way through a thicket which was so densely overgrown we had to clear a passage with our hatchets, we again emerged on the sea-shore beyond, and found an open view, the forest

sweeping inland, while on the space before us stood at intervals single trees of remarkable appearance.

We approached to examine them, and I recognized them as calabash trees, the fruit of which grows in this curious way on the stems, and is a species of gourd, from the hard rind of which bowls, spoons, and bottles can be made. "The savages," I remarked, "are said to form these things most ingeniously, using them to contain liquids: indeed, they actually cook food in them."

Fritz instantly took up one of the gourds, and tried to split it equally with his knife, but in vain: the blade slipped, and the calabash was cut jaggedly. "What a nuisance!" said Fritz, flinging it down, "the thing is spoiled; and yet it seemed so simple to divide it properly."

"Stay," said I; "you are too impatient. Those pieces are not useless. Do you try to fashion from them a spoon or two while I provide a dish."

I then took from my pocket a piece of string, which I tied tightly round a gourd, as near one end of it as I could; then tapping the string with the back of my knife, it penetrated the outer shell. When this was accomplished, I tied the string yet tighter; and drawing the ends with all my might, the gourd fell, divided exactly as I wished. I then filled several gourds with sand, and left them to dry, marking the spot that we might return for them on our way back.

For three hours or more we pushed forward,

keeping a sharp lookout on either side for any trace of our companions, till we reached a bold promontory stretching some way into the sea from whose rocky summit I knew that we should obtain a comprehensive view of the surrounding country. With little difficulty we reached the top, but the most careful survey of the beautiful landscape failed to show us the slightest sign or trace of human beings.

We descended the hill and made for a clump of palm trees. To reach this, we had to pass through a dense thicket of reeds, no pleasant or easy task; for, besides the difficulty of forcing our way through, I feared at every step that we might tread on some venomous snake. Sending Turk in advance, I cut one of the reeds, thinking it would be a more useful weapon against a reptile than my gun. I had carried it but a little way when I noticed a thick juice exuding from one end. I tasted it, and to my delight found it sweet and pleasant. I at once knew that I was standing amongst sugar-canes. Wishing Fritz to make the same discovery, I advised him to cut a cane for his defense; he did so, and as he beat the ground before him, the reed split, and his hand was covered with the juice.

"Oh, father, sugar-canes! Sugar-canes! Taste it. Oh, how delicious, how delightful! Do let us take a lot home to mother!"

"Gently there," said I; "take breath a moment. Moderation in all things, remember. Cut some to

take home if you like, only don't take more than you can conveniently carry."

In spite of my warning, my son cut a dozen or more of the largest canes, and stripping them of their leaves, carried them under his arm. We then pushed through the cane-brake, and reached the clump of palms for which we had been making. As we entered it a troop of monkeys sprang up, chattering and grimacing, and before we could clearly distinguish them were at the very top of the trees.

Fritz was so provoked by their impertinent gestures that he raised his gun and would have shot one of the poor beasts.

"Stay," cried I, "never take the life of any animal needlessly. A live monkey up in that tree is of more use to us than a dozen dead ones at our feet."

Saying this, I gathered a handful of small stones, and threw them up toward the apes. The stones did not go near them, but influenced by their instinctive mania for imitation, they instantly seized all the cocoanuts within their reach and sent a perfect hail of them down upon us. I slung a couple of the nuts over my shoulder, fastening them together by their stalks, and Fritz having resumed his burden, we began our homeward march.

I soon discovered Fritz found the weight of his canes considerably more than he expected: he shifted them from shoulder to shoulder, then for a while carried them under his arm, and finally

stopped short with a sigh. "I had no idea," he said, "that a few reeds would be so heavy."

"Never mind, my boy," I said; "patience and courage! Let us each take a fresh staff, and then fasten the bundle crosswise with your gun."

Fritz became speedily perfect in the accomplishment of sucking sugar-cane, discovering by experience the necessity for a fresh cut at each joint in the cane, through which the juice would not flow; he talked of the pleasure of initiating his brothers in the art, and of how Ernest would enjoy the cocoanut milk, with which he had filled his flask.

"My dear boy," said I, "you need not have added that to your load; the chances are it is vinegar by the time we get home. In the heat of the sun, it will ferment soon after being drawn from the nut."

"Vinegar! Oh, that would be a horrid bore! I must look directly, and see how it is getting on," cried Fritz, hastily swinging the flask from his shoulder, and tugging out the cork.

"My dear father, you cannot think how good it is! Do take some. Vinegar, indeed! This is like excellent wine."

We were both invigorated by this unexpected draught, and went on so merrily after it that the distance to the place where we had left our gourd-dishes seemed less than we expected. We found them quite dry, and very light and easy to carry.

Just as we passed through the grove in which we had breakfasted, Turk suddenly darted away from

us and sprang furiously among a troop of monkeys. They were taken by surprise completely, and the dog, now really ravenous from hunger, had seized and was fiercely tearing one to pieces before we could approach the spot.

His luckless victim was the mother of a tiny little monkey, which, being on her back when the dog flew at her, hindered her flight. The little creature attempted to hide among the grass, and in trembling fear watched its mother. On perceiving Turk's bloodthirsty design, Fritz had eagerly rushed to the rescue, flinging away all he was carrying, and losing his hat in his haste. All to no purpose as far as the poor mother ape was concerned, and a laughable scene ensued, for no sooner did the young monkey catch sight of him than at one bound it was on his shoulders, and, holding fast by his thick curly hair, it firmly kept its seat in spite of all he could do to dislodge it. He screamed and plunged about as he endeavored to shake or pull the creature off, but all in vain; it only clung the closer to his neck, making the most absurd grimaces.

At last I managed to relieve poor Fritz, who then looked with interest at the baby ape, no bigger than a kitten, as it lay in my arms.

"What a jolly little fellow it is!" exclaimed he. "Do let me try to rear it, father. I daresay coconut milk would do until we can bring the cow and the goats from the wreck."

The tiny ape seated itself in the coolest way im-

aguable on Fritz's shoulder, I helped to carry his canes, and we were on some distance before Turk overtook us, looking uncommonly well pleased, and licking his chops as though recalling the memory of his feast.

My son inquired to what species of the monkey tribe I thought his *protégé* belonged, which led to a good deal of talk on the subject, and conversation beguiling the way, we found ourselves ere long on the rocky margin of the stream and close to the rest of our party.

One after another our dear ones came running to the opposite bank, testifying in various ways their delight at our return, and hastening up on their side of the river, as we on ours, to the ford at which we had crossed in the morning. We were quickly on the other side, and, full of joy and affection, our happy party was once more united.

The boys suddenly perceiving the little animal which was clinging close to their brother in alarm at the tumult of voices, shouted in ecstasy:

"A monkey! a monkey! oh, how splendid! Where did Fritz find him? What may we give him to eat? Oh, what a bundle of sticks! Look at those curious, great nuts father has got!"

My wife, as a prudent housekeeper, was no less delighted than the children with the cocoanuts and sugar canes; the sight of the dishes also pleased her greatly, for she longed to see us eat once more like civilized beings. We went to the kitchen place and there found preparations for a truly sump-

tuous meal. Two forked sticks were planted in the ground on either side of the fire; on these rested a rod from which hung several tempting-looking fish; opposite them hung a goose from a similar contrivance, slowly roasting while the gravy dropped into a large shell placed beneath it. In the center sat the great pot, from which issued the smell of a most delicious soup. To crown this splendid array, stood an open hogshead full of Dutch cheeses. All this was very pleasant to two hungry travelers, but I was about to beg my wife to spare the poultry until our stock should have increased, when she, perceiving my thought, quickly relieved my anxiety. "This is not one of our geese," she said, "but a wild bird Ernest killed."

"Yes," said Ernest, "it is a penguin, I think; it let me get quite close, so that I knocked it on the head with a stick."

Fritz now suddenly recollected his delicious wine, and producing his flask, begged his mother to taste it. "Try it first yourself," said I; Fritz did so, and I instantly saw by his countenance that the liquor had passed through the first stage of fermentation and had become vinegar.

"Never mind, my boy," said my prudent wife, when she learned the cause of his wry faces, "we have wine already, but no vinegar; I am really pleased at the transformation."

The sun was now rapidly sinking behind the horizon, and the poultry, retiring for the night, warned us that we must follow their example.



Two forked sticks were planted in the ground on either side of the fire.

Having offered up our prayers, we lay down on our beds, the monkey crouched down between Jack and Fritz, and we were all soon fast asleep.

We did not, however, long enjoy this repose; a loud barking from our dogs, who were on guard outside the tent, awakened us, and the fluttering and cackling of our poultry warned us that a foe was approaching. Fritz and I sprang up, and seizing our guns rushed out. There we found a desperate combat going on; our gallant dogs, surrounded by a dozen or more large jackals, were fighting bravely. Four of their opponents lay dead, but the others were in no way deterred by the fate of their comrades. Fritz and I, however, sent bullets through the heads of a couple more, and the rest galloped off.

Soundly and peacefully we slept until cock-crow next morning, when my wife and I awoke, and began to discuss the business of the day.

"It seems absolutely necessary, my dear wife," I began, "to return at once to the wreck while it is yet calm, that we may save the poor animals left there, and bring on shore many articles of infinite value to us, which, if we do not now recover, we may finally lose entirely."

"Return to the wreck by all means," replied my wife, cheerfully. "Come, let us wake the children, and set to work without delay."

I then summoned all to prayers, soon after which we began our breakfast. So severely had we dealt with our supper the previous night that we had

little to eat but the biscuits, which were so dry and hard, that, hungry as we were, we could not swallow much. Fritz and I took some cheese to help them down, while my wife and younger sons soaked theirs in water. Ernest roamed down to the shore, and looked about for shell-fish. Presently he returned with a few whelks. "Ah," said he, "if we had but some butter."

"My good boy," I replied, "your perpetual IF, IF quite annoys me; why do you not sit down and eat cheese like the rest of us?"

"Not while I can get butter," he said. "See here, father," and he pointed to a large cask, "that barrel contains butter of some sort or another, for it is oozing out at the end."

"Really, Ernest," I said, "we are indebted to you. I will open the cask." So saying, I took a knife and carefully cut a small hole, so that I could extract the butter without exposing the mass of it to the effects of the air and heat. Filling a cocoanut shell, we once more sat down, and toasting our biscuits before the fire, spread them with the good Dutch butter. We found this vastly better than the dry biscuits, and while we were thus employed I noticed that the two dogs were lying unusually quiet by my side. I at first attributed this drowsiness to their large meal during the night, but I soon discovered that the faithful animals in their late combat had received several deep and painful wounds, especially about the neck. The dogs began to lick each other on the places

which they could not reach with their own tongues, and my wife carefully dressed the wounds with butter, from which she had extracted the salt by washing.

A sudden thought now struck Ernest, and he wisely remarked that if we were to make spiked collars for the dogs, they would in future escape such dangerous wounds.

"Now, Fritz," I said, "we must be starting, for you and I are to make a trip to the wreck." I erected a signal post, and, while Fritz was making preparations for our departure, hoisted a strip of sailcloth as a flag; this flag was to remain hoisted so long as all was well on shore, but should our return be desired, three shots were to be fired and the flag lowered.

All was now ready, and warning my wife that we might find it necessary to remain all night on the vessel, we tenderly bade adieu and embarked. We had not got far from the shore, when I perceived that a current from the river set in directly for the vessel, and though my nautical knowledge was not great, I succeeded in steering the boat into the favorable stream, which carried us nearly three-fourths of our passage with little or no trouble to ourselves; then, by dint of hard pulling, we accomplished the whole distance, and entering through the breach, gladly made fast our boat and stepped on board. Our first care was to see the animals, who greeted us with joy—lowing, bellowing, and bleating as we approached; not that the

poor beasts were hungry, for they were all still well supplied with food, but they were apparently pleased by the mere sight of human beings.

"Now," said I, "where shall we begin?"

"Let us fix a mast and sail to our boat," answered Fritz; "for the current which brought us out will not take us back, whereas the fresh breeze would help us immensely had we but a sail."

I chose a stout spar to serve as a mast, and having made a hole in a plank nailed across one of the tubs, we, with the help of a rope and a couple of blocks, stepped it and secured it with stays. We then discovered a lug-sail, which had belonged to one of the ship's boats; this we hoisted; and our craft was ready to sail.

So much time had now slipped away that we found we could not return that night, as I had wished. We signaled our intention of remaining on board, and then spent the rest of our time in taking out the stones we had placed in the boat for ballast, and stowed in their place heavy articles of value to us. The ship had sailed for the purpose of supplying a young colony. She had therefore on board every conceivable article we could desire in our present situation; our only difficulty, indeed, was to make a wise selection. A large quantity of powder and shot we first secured, and as Fritz considered that we could not have too many weapons, we added three excellent guns, and a whole armful of swords, daggers, and knives. We remembered that knives and forks were necessary;

we therefore laid in a large stock of them, and kitchen utensils of all sorts. Exploring the captain's cabin, we discovered a service of silver plate and a cellaret of good old wine; we then went over the stores, and supplied ourselves with potted meats, portable soups, Westphalian hams, sausages, a bag of maize and wheat, and a quantity of other seeds and vegetables. I then added a barrel of sulphur for matches, and as much cordage as I could find. All this—with nails, tools, and agricultural implements—completed our cargo, and sank our boat so low that I should have been obliged to lighten her had not the sea been calm.

Night drew on, and a large fire, lighted by those on shore, showed us that all was well. We replied by hoisting four ship's lanterns, and two shots announced to us that our signal was perceived; then, with a heartfelt prayer for the safety of our dear ones on shore, we retired to our boat, and Fritz, at all events, was soon sound asleep.

At daybreak Fritz and I arose and went on deck. I brought the telescope to bear upon the shore, and with pleasure saw the flag still waving in the morning breeze; while I kept the glass directed to the land, I saw the door of the tent open, and my wife appear and look steadfastly toward us.

I at once hoisted a white flag, and in reply the flag on shore was thrice dipped. Oh, what a weight seemed lifted from my heart as I saw the signal!

"Fritz," I said, "I am not now in such haste to

get back, and begin to feel compassion for all these poor beasts. I wish we could devise some means for getting them on shore."

"Well," said Fritz, "I can think of no way but a raft, unless indeed we make them such swimming belts as you made for the children."

"Really, my boy, that idea is worth having."

So saying, I caught a fine sheep, and proceeded to put his plan into execution. I first fastened a broad piece of linen round its belly, and to this attached some corks and empty tins; then, with Fritz's help, I flung the animal into the sea—it sank, but a moment afterward rose and floated famously.

"Hurrah!" exclaimed Fritz, "we will treat them all like that." We then rapidly caught the other animals and provided them, one after the other, with a similar contrivance.

We had fastened to the horns or neck of each animal a cord with a float attached to the end, and now embarking, we gathered up these floats, set sail, and steered for shore, drawing our herd after us. Borne onward by the breeze, we quickly neared the shore. Steering the boat to a convenient landing place, I cast off the ropes which secured the animals, and let them get ashore as best they might.

There was no sign of my wife or children when we stepped on land, but a few moments afterward they appeared, and with a shout of joy ran toward us. We were thankful to be once more united,

and after asking and replying to a few preliminary questions, proceeded to release our herd from their swimming belts, which, though so useful in the water, were exceedingly inconvenient on shore. My wife was astonished at the apparatus.

"How clever you are!" said she.

"I am not the inventor," I replied; "the honor is due to Fritz."

Fritz, Ernest, and I began the work of unloading our craft, while Jack, seeing that the poor donkey was still encumbered with his swimming belt, tried to free him from it. But the donkey would not stand quiet, and the child's fingers were not strong enough to loosen the cordage; finally, therefore, he scrambled upon the animal's back, and urging him on with hand and foot, trotted toward us.

"Come, my boy," I said, "no one must be idle here, even for a moment; you will have riding practice enough hereafter; dismount and come and help us."

Jack was soon on his feet. "But I have not been idle all day," he said; "look here!" and he pointed to a belt round his waist. It was a broad belt of yellow hair, in which he had stuck a couple of pistols and a knife. "And see," he added, "what I have made for the dogs. Here, Juno! Turk!" The dogs came bounding up at his call, and I saw that they were each supplied with a collar of the same skin, in which were fastened nails, which bristled round their necks in a most formidable manner.

"Capital, capital, my boy!" said I; "but where did you get your materials, and who helped you?"

"Except in cutting the skin," said my wife, "he had no assistance, and as for the materials, Fritz's jackal supplied us with the skin, and the needles and thread came out of my wonderful bag. You little think how many useful things may be had from that same bag; it is a woman's duty and nature, you know, to see after trifles."

Leaving my wife to prepare supper, we returned to the shore and brought up what of the cargo we had left there; then, having collected our herd of animals, we returned to the tent.

The meal which awaited us was as unlike the first supper we had there enjoyed as possible. My wife had improvised a table of a board laid on two casks; on this was spread a white damask tablecloth, on which were placed knives, forks, spoons, and plates for each person. A tureen of good soup first appeared, followed by a capital omelette of turtle eggs, then slices of the Westphalian ham from the ship; and finally some Dutch cheese, butter, and biscuits, with a bottle of the captain's Canary wine, completed the repast.

While we thus regaled ourselves, I related to my wife our adventures, and then begged she would remember her promise and tell me all that had happened in my absence.

CHAPTER III

THE HOUSE IN THE TREE

"I will spare you a description," said my wife, "of our first day's occupations; truth to tell, I spent the time chiefly in anxious thought and watching your progress and signals. I rose very early this morning, and with the utmost joy perceiving your signal that all was right, hastened to reply to it, and then, while my sons yet slumbered, I sat down and began to consider how our position could be improved. 'For it is perfectly impossible,' said I to myself, 'to live much longer where we are now. The sun beats burningly the livelong day on this bare, rocky spot; our only shelter is this poor tent, beneath the canvas of which the heat is even more oppressive than on the open shore. Why should not I and my little boys exert ourselves as well as my husband and Fritz?'"

"My scheme of a journey was agreed to joyously by my young companions. Preparations were instantly set on foot, and weapons and provisions provided. Leaving everything in as good order as we could at the tent, we proceeded toward the stream, accompanied by the dogs. Turk, who had accompanied you on your first expedition, seemed

immediately to understand that we wished to pursue the same route, and proudly led the way.

"Filling our water-jar, we crossed the stream, and went on to the height, from whence, as you described, a lovely prospect is obtained.

"A pretty little wood in the distance attracted my notice particularly, and thither we directed our course. Numbers of birds fluttered and sang among the high branches, but I did not encourage the boys in their wish to try to shoot any of the happy little creatures. We were lost in admiration of the trees of this grove, and I cannot describe to you how wonderful they are, nor can you form the least idea of their enormous size without seeing them yourself. What we had been calling a wood proved to be a group of about a dozen trees only, and, what was strange, the roots sustained the massive trunks exalted in the air, forming strong arches, and props and stays all around each individual stem, which was firmly rooted in the center.

"I gave Jack some twine, and scrambling up one of the curious open-air roots, he succeeded in measuring round the trunk itself, and made it out to be about eighteen yards. I saw no sort of fruit, but the foliage is thick and abundant, throwing delicious shade on the ground beneath, which is carpeted with soft green herbage, and entirely free from thorns, briars, or bushes of any kind. It is the most charming resting place that ever was seen, and I and the boys enjoyed our midday meal immensely in this glorious palace of the woods, so

grateful to our senses after the glare and heat of our journey thither.

"The longer we remained in this enchanting place, the more did it charm my fancy; and if we could but manage to live in some sort of dwelling up among the branches of those grand, noble trees. I should feel perfectly safe and happy. It seemed to me absurd to suppose we should ever find another place half so lovely, so I determined to search no further, but return to the beach and see if anything from the wreck had been cast up by the waves, which we could carry away with us.

"On reaching the shore, we found it strewn with many articles, doubtless of value, but all too heavy for us to lift. We rolled some casks, however, beyond high-water mark, and dragged a chest or two also higher on the beach; and, while doing so, observed that our dogs were busy among the rocks. They were carefully watching the crevices and pools, and every now and then would pounce downward and seize something which they swallowed with apparent relish.

" 'They are eating crabs,' said Jack. 'No wonder they have not seemed hungry lately.'

"Some time afterward, just as we were about to turn inland toward the ford, we noticed that Juno was scraping in the sand, and turning up some round substances, which she hastily devoured. Ernest went to see what these were, and reported in his calm way that the dog had found turtles' eggs.

“‘Oh,’ cried I, ‘then let us by all means share in the booty!’

“While thus employed, we caught sight of a sail which appeared to be merrily approaching the shore beyond the cliffs. Ernest declared it must be our raft. Little Franz, always having the fear of savages before his eyes, began to look frightened, and for a moment I myself was doubtful what to think. However, we hastened to the stream; and crossing it by the stepping-stones, came in sight of the landing place, where we joyfully met you.

“Now I hope you approve of the proceedings of your exploring party, and that to-morrow you will do me the favor of packing everything up, and taking us away to live among my splendid trees.”

“Well, I must admit that there is much to commend in your plan,” I replied; “suppose we were to remove to your chosen abode, and make this rocky fastness our magazine and place of retreat in case of danger. I could easily render it more secure, by blasting portions of the rock with gunpowder. But a bridge must be constructed in the first place, to enable us to cross bag and baggage.”

“Oh, I shall be parched to death before we can leave this place if a bridge has to be made,” cried my wife impatiently. “Why not just take our things on our backs and wade across, as we have done already? The cow and the donkey could carry a great deal.”

“That they will have to do, in whatever fashion we make the move,” said I; “but bags and baskets

we must have, to put things in, and if you will turn your attention to providing those, I will set about the bridge at once."

When the children heard of the proposed move their joy was boundless; they began at once to talk of it as our "journey to the Promised Land," and only regretted that time must be "wasted," as they said, in bridge-building before it could be undertaken.

Everyone being impatient for breakfast next morning that work might be begun at once, the cow and goats were milked, and, having enjoyed a comfortable meal of biscuit boiled in milk, I prepared to start for the wreck, in order to obtain planks for the proposed bridge; but perceiving that the shore was strewn with just the sort of boards and planks I wanted, I lost no time in collecting them.

Jack showed me where he thought the bridge should be, and I certainly saw no better place, as the banks were at that point tolerably close to one another, steep, and of about equal height.

"How shall we find out if our planks are long enough to reach across?" said I.

"What do you say to a ball of string, father?" said Ernest. "Tie one end to a stone, throw it across, then draw it back and measure the line!"

Adopting my son's idea, we speedily ascertained the distance across to be eighteen feet. Then allowing three feet more at each side, I calculated twenty-four feet as the necessary length of the boards.

The question as to how the planks were to be laid across was a difficult one. We resolved to discuss it during dinner, to which we were now summoned. And my wife, as we sat resting, displayed to me her needlework. With hard labor she had made two large canvas bags for the ass to carry. Having no suitable needle, she had been obliged to bore the hole for each stitch with a nail, and gained great praise for her ingenuity and patience. Dinner was quickly dispatched, as we were all eager to continue our engineering work. A scheme had occurred to me for conveying one end of a plank across the water, and I set about it in this way. There fortunately were one or two trees close to the stream on either side. I attached a rope pretty near one end of a beam, and slung it loosely to the tree beside us; then, fastening a long rope to the other end, I crossed with it by means of broken rocks and stones, and having a pulley and block, I soon arranged the rope on a strong limb of the opposite tree, again returning with the end to our own side.

Now putting my idea to the proof, I brought the ass and the cow, and fastening this rope to the harness I had previously contrived for them, I drove them steadily away from the bank. To my great satisfaction, and the surprise and delight of the boys, the end of the plank which had been laid alongside the stream began gently to move, rose higher, turned, and soon projecting over the water, continued to advance, until, having described the

segment of a circle, it reached the opposite bank; I stopped my team, the plank rested on the ground, the bridge was made! So at least thought Fritz and Jack, who in a moment were lightly running across the narrow way, shouting joyfully as they sprang to the other side.

Our work was now comparatively easy. A second and third plank were laid beside the first; and when these were carefully secured at each end to the ground and to the trees, we very quickly laid short boards side by side across the beams, the boys nailing them lightly down as I sawed them in lengths; and when this was done, our bridge was pronounced complete. Nothing could exceed the excitement of the children. They danced to and fro on the wonderful structure, singing, shouting, and cutting the wildest capers.

Next morning, while we breakfasted, I made a little speech to my sons on the subject of the important move we were about to make, wishing to impress them with a sense of the absolute necessity of great caution.

"Remember," said I, "that, although you all begin to feel very much at your ease here, we are yet complete strangers to a variety of dangers which may surprise us unawares. I charge you, therefore, to maintain good order, and keep together on the march. No darting off into by-ways, Jack. No lingering behind to philosophize, Ernest. And now all hands to work."

The greatest activity instantly prevailed in our

camp. Some collected provisions, others packed kitchen utensils, tools, ropes, and hammocks, arranging them as burdens for the cow and ass.

Away ran the children to catch the cocks and hens. Great chasing, fluttering, and cackling ensued; but with no success whatever, until the mother recalled her panting sons, and scattering some handfuls of grain within the open tent, soon decoyed the fowls and pigeons into the enclosure; where, when the curtain was dropped, they were easily caught, tied together, and placed on the cow. This amiable and phlegmatic animal had stood calmly chewing the cud, while package after package was disposed on her broad back, nor did she now object even to this noisy addition to her load. I placed a couple of half-hoops over all; and spreading sailcloth on them, put the fowls in darkness, and they rapidly became quiet; and the cow, with the appearance of having a small wagon on her back, was ready to start.

Having filled the tent with the things we left behind, closing it carefully, and ranging chests and casks around it, we were finally ready to be off, each well equipped and in the highest spirits.

With honest pride I introduced my wife to my bridge, and after receiving from her what I considered well-merited praise for my skill in its construction, we passed over it in grand procession, re-enforced unexpectedly on the opposite side by the arrival of our cross-grained old sow. The perverse creature had obstinately resisted our

attempts to bring her with us, but finding herself deserted, had followed of her own accord, testifying in the most unmistakable manner, by angry grunts and squeals, her entire disapproval of our proceedings.

On the firm open sands of the beach we were making good way, when, to my annoyance, both our dogs suddenly left us, and springing into the thick cover to our right, commenced a furious barking, followed by howling as if in fear and violent pain.

Not for a moment doubting that some dangerous animal was at hand, I hastened to the spot, remarking as I went the characteristic behavior of my three sons.

Fritz cocked his gun and advanced boldly, but with caution. Ernest looked disconcerted, and drew back, but got ready to fire, while Jack hurried after Fritz without so much as unslinging his gun from his shoulders.

Before I could come up with them, I heard Jack shouting excitedly: "Father! father! come quickly! a huge porcupine! a most enormous porcupine!"

Sure enough, the dogs were rushing round and round a porcupine, and having attempted to seize it, were already severely wounded by its quills.

Somewhat to my amusement, while we were looking at the curious defense this creature was making, little Jack stepped close up to it, with a pocket pistol in his hand, and shot it dead, making sure of it by a couple of hearty raps on the head,

and then giving way to a burst of boyish exultation, he called upon us to help to convey his prize to his mother. This it was not by any means easy to do. Sundry attempts resulted in bloody fingers, till Jack, taking his pocket handkerchief, and fastening one corner round its neck, ran off, dragging it after him to where his mother awaited us.

"Hullo, mother! here's a jolly beast, isn't it? I shot it, and it's good to eat! Father says so! I only wish you had seen how it terrified the dogs, and heard the rattling and rustling of its spines. Oh, it is a fearful creature!"

Our party then resumed the march, which, with little interruption, was continued steadily until we came in sight of our future place of residence.

The wonderful appearance of the enormous trees, and the calm beauty of the spot altogether, fully came up to the enthusiastic description which had been given me. And my wife gladly heard me say that, if an abode could be contrived among the branches, it would be the safest and most charming home in the world.

We hastily unloaded the ass and cow, securing them, as well as the sheep and goats, by tying their fore-feet loosely together. The doves and poultry were set at liberty, and we sat down to rest among the soft herbage while we laid our plans for the night.

Fritz soon left us, but presently two shots were fired, and he appeared holding a fine tiger cat by the hind legs, which he exhibited to each in turn.

"May I have the beautiful skin, father? And tell me what will be the best use to make of it?"

"I advise you to skin the animal very carefully, and of the handsome black and yellow tail make a hunting-belt for yourself. The paws—let me see—why, I fancy the paws might be made famous cases for knife, fork, and spoon, and look well hanging from the belt. The skin of the body you had better preserve until you find some suitable use for it."

"Oh, father, what a splendid plan!" cried Jack; "do tell me some good use for my porcupine."

"I think its feet may make cases also; at least, you may try. The quills, I am sure, may be used for packing needles, and for tipping arrows, and I should try to make defensive armor for the dogs out of the rest."

After giving this advice, I got no peace until I had shown my boys how to act upon it, and in short time each had his prize fastened up by the hind legs, and carefully slitting the skin, was stripping it from the carcass.

Ernest, meanwhile, was fetching large flat stones to form a fireplace, while Franz gathered sticks, as his mother was anxious to prepare some food.

"What sort of a tree do you suppose this to be, father?" inquired Ernest, seeing me examining that under which we were encamping. "Is not the leaf something like the walnut?"

"There is a resemblance, but in my opinion these gigantic trees must be mangroves or wild figs. I have heard their enormous height described, and

also the peculiarity of the arching roots supporting the main trunk raised above the soil."

Just then little Franz came up with a large bundle of sticks, and his mouth full of something he was eating with evident satisfaction.

"Oh, mother!" cried he, "this is so good!"

"Greedy little boy!" exclaimed she in a fright. "What have you got there? Don't swallow it, whatever you do. Very likely it is poisonous! Spit it all out this minute!" And the anxious mother quickly extracted from the rosy little mouth the remains of a small fig.

"Where did you find this?" said I.

"There are thousands lying among the grass yonder," replied the little boy. "They taste very nice. I thought poison was nasty. Do you think they will hurt me? The pigeons and hens are gobbling them up with all their might and main!"

"I think you have no cause for alarm, dear wife," I said. "The trees seem to be the fig-bearing mangrove of the Antilles. But remember, Franz, you must never eat anything without first showing it to me, never mind how good it seems. If birds and monkeys eat a fruit or vegetable, it is usually safe to believe it wholesome," added I, turning to the other boys, who, instantly taking the hint, coaxed Franz to give them the figs he still had in his pocket, and ran to offer them to Knips.

"Here, Knips, allow me to present you with a fig!" cried Jack.

Knips took it readily, and after turning it about,

and sniffing and smelling it, he popped it into his mouth, with such a droll grimace of delight and satisfaction that the boys all laughed and clapped



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My wife continued her preparations for dinner.

their hands, crying "Bravo, Knips! you know a good thing when you see it, don't you, old fellow! Hurrah!"

My wife, with her mind set at rest on the question

of the figs, now continued her preparations for dinner.

We examined the different trees, and chose one which seemed most suited to our purpose. The branches spread at a great height above us, and I made the boys try if it were possible to throw sticks or stones over one of these, my intention being to construct a rope ladder if we could once succeed in getting a string across a strong bough.

Finding we could not succeed in that way, I revolved other schemes in my mind, and meantime went with Jack and Fritz to a small brook close by, where I showed them how to place the skins to steep and soften in the water.

When dinner was over, I prepared our night quarters. I first slung our hammocks from the roots of the tree, which, meeting above us, formed an arched roof, then covering the whole with sail-cloth, we made a temporary tent, which would at least keep off the night damps and noxious insects.

Leaving my wife engaged in making a set of harness for the ass and cow, I walked down with Fritz and Ernest to the beach to look for wood suitable for building our new abode, and also to discover, if possible, some light rods to form a ladder. For some time we hunted in vain, nothing but rough driftwood was to be seen, utterly unfit for our purpose. Ernest at length pointed out a quantity of bamboos, half buried in the sand. These were exactly what I wanted, and stripping them of their leaves I cut them into lengths of about five feet

each; these I bound in bundles to carry to the tree, and then began to look about for some slight reeds to serve as arrows.

I presently saw what I required in a copse at a little distance. Juno rushed ahead; as she did so a flock of flamingoes, which had been quietly feeding, rose in the air. Fritz, instantly firing, brought a couple of the birds to the ground, the rest of the squadron sailing away in perfect order, their plumage continually changing, as they flew, from beautiful rose to pure white, as alternately their snowy wings and rosy breasts were visible. One of those which fell was perfectly dead, but the other appeared only slightly wounded in the wing, for it made off across the swampy ground. Juno speedily brought it to my feet. Fritz and Ernest were delighted at the sight of our prize.

"What a handsome bird!" exclaimed they. "Is it much hurt? Let us tame it and let it run about with the fowls."

Fritz and Ernest carried the birds and bamboos to the tree, while I proceeded to cut my reeds. I chose those which had flowered, knowing that they were harder, bound them together and returned to my family.

"Do you mean to keep this great hungry bird Fritz has brought?" said my wife. "It is another mouth to feed, remember, and provisions are still scarce."

"Luckily," I replied, "the flamingo will not eat grain like our poultry, but will be quite satisfied

with insects, fish, and little crabs, which it will pick up for itself. Pray reassure yourself, therefore, and let me see to the poor bird's wound."

While I was thus employed my sons were endeavoring to ascertain the height of the lowest branch of the tree from the ground. They had fastened together the long reeds I had brought, and were trying to measure the distance with them, but in vain.

"Hullo, my boys," I said, when I discovered what they were about, "that is not the way to set to work. Geometry will simplify the operation considerably."

So saying, I measured out a certain distance from the base of the tree and marked the spot, and then by means of a rod whose length I knew, and imaginary lines, I calculated the angle subtended by the trunk of the tree from the ground to the root of the branch. This done, I was able to discover the height required, and, to the astonishment of the younger children, announced that we should henceforth live thirty feet above the ground.

Telling Fritz to collect all our cord, and the others to roll all the twine into a ball, I sat down, and taking the reeds, speedily manufactured half a dozen arrows and feathered them from the dead flamingo. I then took a strong bamboo, bent it, and strung it so as to form a bow.

"Elizabeth," I said to my wife, "can you supply me with a ball of stout thread from your wonderful bag?"

"Certainly," replied she, "I think a ball of thread was the first thing to enter the bag."

"Now, boys," I said, "I am going to fire the first shot," and I fastened one end of the thread to one of my arrows and aimed at a large branch above me. The arrow flew upward and bore the thread over the branch and fell at our feet. Thus was the first step in our undertaking accomplished. Now for the rope ladder!

Fritz had obtained two coils of cord, each about forty feet in length; these we stretched on the ground side by side; then Fritz cut the bamboos into pieces of two feet for the steps of the ladder, and as he handed them to me, I passed them through knots which I had prepared in the ropes, while Jack fixed each end with a nail driven through the wood. When the ladder was finished, I carried over the bough a rope by which it might be hauled up. This done, I fixed the lower end of the ladder firmly to the ground by means of stakes, and all was ready for an ascent. The boys who had been watching me with intense interest were each eager to be first.

"Jack shall have the honor," said I, "as he is the lightest; so up with you, my boy, and do not break your neck."

Jack who was as active as a monkey, sprang up the ladder and quickly gained the top.

"Three cheers for the nest!" he exclaimed, waving his cap. "Hurrah, hurrah, hurrah for our jolly nest! Come along, Fritz!"

His brother was soon by his side, and with a hammer and nails secured the ladder yet more securely. I followed with an ax, and took a survey of the tree. It was admirably suited to our purpose; the branches were very strong and so closely interwoven that no beams would be required to form a flooring, but when some of the boughs were lopped and cleared away, a few planks would be quite sufficient.

I now called for a pulley, which my wife fastened to the cord hanging beside the ladder. I hauled it up, and finding the boys rather in my way, told them to go down, while I proceeded to fasten the pulley to a stout branch above me, that we might be able to haul up the beams we should require the next day. I then made other preparations, that there might be no delay on the morrow, and a bright moon having arisen, I by its light continued working until I was quite worn out.

Early next morning we dispersed to our various occupations. My wife milked the goats and cow, while we gave the animals their food, after which we went down to the beach to collect more wood for our building operations. To the larger beams we harnessed the cow and ass, while we ourselves dragged up the remainder. Fritz and I then ascended the tree, and finished the preparations I had begun the night before. All useless boughs we lopped off, leaving a few about six feet from the floor, from which we might sling our hammocks, and others still higher, to support a temporary roof

of sailcloth. My wife made fast the planks to a rope passed through the block I had fixed to the boughs above us, and by this means Fritz and I hauled them up. These we arranged side by side on the foundation of boughs, so as to form a smooth solid floor, and round this platform built a bulwark of planks, and then throwing the sailcloth over the higher branches, we drew it down and firmly nailed it. Our house was thus enclosed on three sides, for behind the great trunk protected us, while the front was left open to admit the fresh sea breeze which blew directly in. We then hauled up our hammocks and bedding and slung them from the branches we had left for that purpose. A few hours of daylight still remaining, we cleared the floor of leaves and chips, and then descended to fashion a table and a few benches from the remainder of the wood. After working like slaves all day, Fritz and I flung ourselves on the grass, while my wife arranged supper on the table we had made.

"Come," said she at length, "come and taste flamingo stew, and tell me how you like it. Ernest assured me that it would be much better stewed than roasted, and I have followed his directions."

Laughing at the idea of Ernest turning scientific cook, we sat down. The fowls gathered round us to pick up the crumbs, and the tame flamingo joined them, while Master Knips skipped about from one to the other, chattering and mimicking our gestures continually. To my wife's joy, the sow appeared shortly after, and was presented

with all the milk that remained from the day's stock that she might be persuaded to return every night. "For," said my wife, "this surplus milk is really of no use to us, as it will be sour before the morning in this hot climate."

"You are quite right," I replied, "but we must contrive to make it of use. The next time Fritz and I go to the wreck we will bring off a churn."

"Must you really go again to that dreadful wreck?" said my wife, shuddering. "You have no idea how anxious I am when you are away there."

"Go we must, I am afraid," I replied, "but not for a day or two yet. Come, it is getting late. We and the chickens must go to roost."

We lit our watch-fires, and, leaving the dogs on guard below, ascended the ladder. Fritz, Ernest, and Jack were up in a moment. Their mother followed very cautiously, for though she had originated the idea of building a nest, she yet hesitated to trust herself at such a terrific height from the ground. When she was safely landed in the house, taking little Franz on my back, I let go the fastenings which secured the lower end of the ladder to the ground, and swinging to and fro, slowly ascended.

Then for the first time we stood all together in our new home. I drew up the ladder, and, with a greater sense of security than I had enjoyed since we landed on the island, offered up our evening prayer, and retired for the night.

CHAPTER IV

AN EXPEDITION TO TENTHOLM

Next morning all were early awake, and the children sprang about the tree like young monkeys.

"What shall we begin to do, father?" they cried. "What do you want us to do to-day?"

"Six days shalt thou labor and do all that thou hast to do, but on the seventh, thou shalt do no manner of work.' This is the seventh day," I replied, "on it, therefore, let us rest."

"What, is it really Sunday?" asked Jack; "how jolly! oh I won't do any work; but I'll take a bow and arrow and shoot, and we'll climb about the tree and have fun all day."

"That is not resting," said I, "that is not the way you are accustomed to spend the Lord's day."

"No! but then we can't go to church here, and there is nothing else to do."

"We can worship here as well as at home," said I.

"But there is no church, no clergyman, and no organ," said Franz.

"The leafy shade of this great tree is far more beautiful than any church," I said; "there will we worship our Creator. Come, boys, down with you: turn our dining hall into a breakfast room."

The children, one by one, slipped down the ladder.

"My dear Elizabeth," said I, "this morning we will devote to the service of the Lord; but, without books, or the possibility of any of the usual Sunday occupations, we cannot keep the boys quiet the whole day; afterward, therefore, I shall allow them to pursue any innocent recreation they choose, and in the cool of the evening we will take a walk."

My wife entirely agreed with my proposal, and having breakfasted, the family assembled round me, as we sat in the pleasant shade on the fresh, soft green grass.

After singing some hymns and offering heartfelt prayers to the Almighty giver of all good, I told the children I would relate to them a parable instead of preaching a sermon.

"Oh, that will be delightful! I like the parables in the Bible better than anything," said Franz. "When can we hear you read out of the Bible again, father?"

"Ah, my little boy, your words reproach me," returned I. "While eagerly striving to procure from the ship what would feed our bodies and provide for *their* comfort, I blush to think that I have neglected the Bread of Life, the word of God. I shall search for a Bible on my next return to the wreck: although our own books were nearly all destroyed, I am pretty sure to find one."

At these words my wife arose, and, fetching her magic bag, she drew from it a copy of the Holy

Scriptures, which I thankfully received from her hand; and, after reading aloud from its sacred pages, I pressed simply and earnestly home to each young heart the truths I sought to teach; and, with a short prayer for a blessing on my words, brought the service to a close.

After a thoughtful pause, we separated, and each employed himself as he felt disposed.

I took some arrows and endeavored to point them with porcupine quills.

Franz came to beg me make a little bow and arrow for him to shoot with, while Fritz asked my advice about the tiger cat skin and the cases he was to contrive from it. Jack assisted with the arrow making, and inserting a sharp spine at one end of each reed made it fast with pack-thread.

While directing and assisting my sons, we were surprised by hearing a shot just over our heads; at the same moment two small birds fell dead at our feet, and looking up, we beheld Ernest among the branches, as bending his face joyfully toward us, he cried, "Well hit! well hit! a good shot, wasn't it?"

Then slipping down the ladder, and picking up the birds, he brought them to me. One was a kind of thrush, the other a small dove called the ortolan, and esteemed a very great delicacy on account of its exquisite flavor. As the figs on which these birds came to feed were only just beginning to ripen, it was probable that they would soon flock in numbers to our trees; and by waiting until we could procure them in large quantities, we might provide our-

selves with valuable food for the rainy season, by placing them, when half cooked, in cases with melted lard or butter poured over them.

By this time Jack had pointed a good supply of arrows, and industriously practised archery. I finished the bow and arrows for Franz, and expected to be left in peace; but the young man next demanded a quiver, and I had to invent that also, to complete his equipment.

Not long after this, we were summoned to dinner, and all right willingly obeyed the call.

During the meal I interested the boys very much by proposing to decide on suitable names for the different spots we had visited on this coast.

"For," said I, "it will become more and more troublesome to explain what we mean, unless we do so. Beside which, we shall feel much more at home if we can talk as people do in inhabited countries, instead of saying, for instance, 'the little island at the mouth of our bay,' 'the large stream near our tent, across which we made the bridge,' 'that wood where we found cocoanuts, and caught the monkey,' and so on. Let us begin by naming the bay in which we landed. What shall we call it?"

"Oyster Bay," said Fritz.

"No, no!—Lobster Bay," cried Jack, "in memory of the old fellow who took a fancy to my leg!"

"I think," observed his mother, "in token of gratitude for our escape, we should call it Safety Bay."

This name met with general approbation, and was forthwith fixed upon.

Other names were quickly chosen. Our first place of abode we called Tentholt; the islet in the bay, Shark's Island; and the reedy swamp, Flamingo Marsh. It was some time before the serious question of a name for our leafy castle could be decided. But finally it was entitled Falconhurst;¹ and we then rapidly named the few remaining points: Prospect Hill, the eminence we first ascended; Cape Disappointment, from whose rocky heights we had strained our eyes in vain search for our ship's company; and Jackal River as a name for the large stream at our landing place, concluded our geographical nomenclature.

In the afternoon the boys went on with their various employments. Fritz finished his cases, and Jack asked my assistance in carrying out his plan of making a cuirass for Turk out of the porcupine skin. After thoroughly cleansing the inside, we cut and fitted it round the body of the patient dog; then when strings were sewn on and it became tolerably dry, he was armed with this ingenious coat of mail, and a most singular figure he cut!

Amid these interesting occupations the evening drew on, and after a pleasant walk among the sweet glades near our abode, we closed our Sabbath day with prayer and a glad hymn of praise, retiring to rest with peaceful hearts.

Next morning, I proposed an expedition to Tent-

¹ *Horst*, in German, means "nest" or "eyrie."

holm, saying I wished to make my way thither by a different route. We left the tree well armed; I and my three elder sons each carrying a gun and game bag, while little Franz was equipped with his bow and quiver full of arrows. We strolled on in the cool air, following the course of the stream; the great trees overshadowed us, and the cool, green sward stretched away between them at our feet. The boys roamed ahead of me, intent on exploration. Presently I heard a joyful shout, and saw Ernest running at full speed toward me, followed by his brothers. In his hand he held a plant, and, panting for breath, and with sparkling eyes, he held it up to me.

"Potatoes! potatoes, father!" he gasped out.

"Yes," said Jack, "acres and acres of potatoes!"

So delighted were we with the discovery, and so eager were we to possess a large supply of the roots, that we stopped not digging until every bag, pouch, and pocket was filled. Some wished to return at once to Falconhurst, to cook and taste our new acquisition; but this I overruled, and we continued our march, heavily laden, but delighted.

As we thus talked, we reached the head of our streamlet, where it fell from the rocks above in a beautiful, sparkling, splashing cascade. We crossed and entered the tall grass on the other side. We forced our way through with difficulty, so thick and tangled were the reeds. Beyond this, the landscape was most lovely. Rich tropical vegetation flourished on every side: the tall, stately

palms, surrounded by luxuriant ferns; brilliant flowers and graceful creepers; the prickly cactus shooting up amidst them; aloe, jasmine, and sweet-scented vanilla; the Indian pea, and above all the regal pine-apple loaded the breath of the breeze with their rich perfume. The boys were delighted with the pine-apple, and so eagerly did they fall to, that my wife had to caution them that there were no doctors on our territory, and if they became ill, they would have to cure themselves as best they might.

While they were thus employed, I examined the other shrubs and bushes. Among these I presently noticed one which I knew well from description to be the karatas.

"Come here, boys," I said; "here is something of far more value than your pine-apples. Do you see that plant with long pointed leaves and beautiful red flower? That is the karatas. The filaments of the leaves make capital thread, while the leaves themselves, bruised, form an invaluable salve. The pith of this wonderful plant may be used either for tinder or bait for fish. Suppose, Ernest, you had been wrecked here, how would you have made a fire without matches, or flint and steel?"

"As the savages do," replied he; "I would rub two pieces of wood together until they kindled."

"Try it," I said; "but, if you please, try it when you have a whole day before you, and no other work to be done, for I am certain it would be night

before you accomplished the feat. But see here," and I broke a dry twig from the karatas, and peeling off the bark, laid the pith upon a stone. I struck a couple of pebbles over it, and they emitting a spark, the pith caught fire.

The boys were delighted with the experiment. I then drew some of the threads from the leaves, and presented them to my wife.

We at length reached Tentholm where everything was safe, and we set to work to collect what we wanted. I opened the butter cask, from which my wife filled her pot. Fritz saw after the ammunition, and Jack and Ernest ran down to the beach to capture the geese and ducks. This they found no easy matter, for the birds, left so long alone, were shy. Ernest at length hit upon an ingenious plan. He took some pieces of cheese, and tied them to long strings. This bait he threw into the water, and the hungry ducks instantly made a grab at it; then with a little skillful maneuvering he drew them on shore. The birds we fastened to our game bags, and carefully closing the door of our tent, started homeward by the seashore. After a cheerful and pleasant walk, we once more reached our woodland abode. I released the birds and, clipping their wings to prevent their leaving us, established them on the stream. Then, after a delicious supper of potatoes, milk, and butter, we ascended our tree and turned in.

Having remarked a great deal of driftwood on

the sands the preceding evening, it occurred to me that it would be well to get some of it, and make a kind of sledge, so that the labor of fetching what we wanted from our stores at Tentholm might not fall so heavily on ourselves.

I awoke early, and roused Ernest as my assistant, wishing to encourage him to overcome his natural fault of indolence. After a little stretching and yawning, he got up cheerfully, pleased with the idea of an expedition while the others still slept, and we made our way to the beach, taking with us the donkey, who drew a large broad bough, which I expected to find useful in bringing back our load.

Once on the seashore, our work was quickly accomplished, for, selecting the wood I thought fit for my purpose, we laid it across the broad, leafy branch, and, with some help from us, the donkey dragged a very fair load of it homeward, with the addition of a small chest, which I raised from among the sand, which nearly covered it.

We heard the boys popping away at the ortolans as we drew near. They hastened to meet us, and inquired where we had been, looking curiously at the chest, which I allowed them to open, while I asked my wife to excuse our "absence without leave," and after submitting to her gentle reprimand, I explained my plan for a sledge, which pleased her greatly, and she already imagined it loaded with her hogshead of butter, and on its way from Tentholm to Falconhurst.

The chest proved to be merely that of a common sailor, containing his clothes, very much wetted by the sea water.

The boys exhibited an array of several dozen birds, and related, during breakfast, the various incidents of failure and success which had attended their guns. Practice was making them perfect, and they seemed disposed to continue their sport, when their mother, assuring them that she could not use more birds than those already killed, asked if I did not think some means of snaring them might be contrived, as much powder and shot would be expended if they fired on at this rate.

Entirely agreeing with this view of the subject, I desired the lads to lay aside their guns for the present, and the younger ones readily applied themselves to making snares of the long threads drawn from the leaves of the karatas, in a simple way I taught them, while Fritz and Ernest gave me substantial assistance in the manufacture of the new sledge.

Soon after this, as Jack was setting the newly made snares among the branches, he discovered that a pair of our own pigeons were building in the tree. It was very desirable to increase our stock of these pretty birds, and I cautioned the boys against shooting near our tree while they had nests there, and also with regard to the snares, which were meant only to entrap the wild fig-eaters.

My carpentering meantime went on apace. In order to shape my sledge with ends properly turned

up in front, I had chosen wood which had been part of the bow of the vessel, and was curved in the necessary way for my purpose. Two pieces, perfectly similar, formed the sides of my sleigh, or sledge, and I simply united these strongly by fixing short bars across them. Then, when the ropes of the donkey's harness were attached to the raised points in front, the equipage was complete and ready for use.

My attention had been for some time wholly engrossed by my work, and I only now observed that the mother and her little boys had been busily plucking above two dozen of the wild birds, and were preparing to roast them, spitted in a row on a long, narrow sword blade, belonging to one of our ship's officers.

It seemed somewhat wasteful to cook so many at once; but my wife explained that she was getting them ready for the butter-cask I was going to fetch for her on the new sledge, as I had advised her to preserve them half-cooked, and packed in butter.

Amused at her promptitude, I could do nothing less than promise to go for her cask directly after dinner. For her part, she resolved in our absence to have a grand wash of linen and other clothes, and she advised me to arrange regular baths for all the boys in the future.

Early in the afternoon Ernest and I harnessed the cow and ass to the sledge, and, accompanied by Juno, cheerfully took our departure, choosing

the way by the sands, and reaching Tentholm without accident or adventure.

There unharnessing the animal, we began at once to load the sledge, not only with the butter



Ernest and I began at once to load the sledge, not only with the butter cask, but with a powder chest, a barrel of cheese and a variety of other articles.

cask, but with a powder chest, a barrel of cheese, and a variety of other articles—ball, shot, tools, and Turk's armor, which had been left behind on our last visit.

Our work had so closely engaged our attention, that when we were ready to leave it and go in

search of a good bathing place, we discovered that our two animals had wandered quite out of sight, having crossed the bridge to reach the good pasture beyond the river.

I sent Ernest after them, and went alone to the extremity of the bay. It terminated in bold and precipitous cliffs, which extended into the deep water, and rose abruptly, so as to form an inaccessible wall of rock and crag. Swampy ground, overgrown with large canes, intervened between me and these cliffs. I cut a large bundle of the reeds, and returned to Ernest. It was some time before I found him, comfortably extended full length on the ground near the tent, and sleeping as sound as a top, while the cow and the ass, grazing at will, were again making for the bridge.

"Get up, Ernest, you lazy fellow!" exclaimed I, much annoyed; "why don't you mind your business? Look at the animals! They will be over the river again!"

"No fear of that, father," returned he, with the utmost composure. "I have taken a couple of boards off the bridge. They won't pass the gap."

I could not help laughing at the ingenious device by which the boy had spared himself all trouble; at the same time I observed that it is wrong to waste the precious moments in sleep when duty has to be performed. I then bid him go and collect some salt, which was wanted at home, while I bathed.

On coming back, much refreshed, I again missed Ernest, and began to wonder whether he was still

gathering salt, or whether he had lain down somewhere to finish his nap, when I heard him loudly calling: "Father, father, I've caught a fish! an immense fellow he is. I can scarcely hold him, he drags the line so!"

Hastening toward the spot, I saw the boy lying in the grass, on a point of land close to the mouth of the stream, and with all his might keeping hold of a rod. The line was strained to the utmost by the frantic efforts of a very large fish, which was attempting to free itself from the hook.

I quickly took the rod from him, and giving the fish more line, led him by degrees into shallow water. Ernest ran in with his hatchet and killed him. It proved to be a salmon of full fifteen pounds weight, and I was delighted to think of taking such a valuable prize to the mother.

"This is capital, Ernest!" cried I: "you have cleared yourself for once of the charge of laziness! Let us now carry this splendid salmon to the sledge. I will clean and pack it for the journey, that it may arrive in good condition, while you go and take a bath in the sea."

All this being accomplished, we harnessed our beasts to the well-laden vehicle, and replacing the boards on the bridge, commenced the journey home.

We kept inland this time, and were skirting the borders of a grassy thicket, when Juno suddenly left us, and plunging into the bushes, with fierce barking hunted out, right in front of us, the most singular-looking creature I ever beheld. It was

taking wonderful flying leaps, apparently in a sitting posture, and got over the ground at an astonishing rate. I attempted to shoot it as it passed, but missed. Ernest, who was behind me, observed its movements very coolly, and seeing that the dog was puzzled, and that the animal, having paused, was crouching among the grass, went cautiously nearer, fired at the spot he had marked, and shot it dead.

The extraordinary appearance of this creature surprised us very much. It was as large as a sheep, its head was shaped like that of a mouse; its skin also was of a mouse color, it had long ears like a hare, and a tail like a tiger's. The forepaws resembled those of a squirrel, but they seemed only half-grown, while the hind legs were enormous, and so long that, when upright on them, the animal would look as if mounted on stilts.

For some time we stood silently wondering at the remarkable creature before us. I could not recollect to have seen or heard of any such.

"Well, father," said Ernest at last, "I should say this was about the queerest beast to be met with anywhere. I am glad I knocked it over. How they will all stare when I carry it home!"

"You have had a lucky day altogether, certainly," said I; "but I cannot think what this animal can be. Examine its teeth, and let us see to what class of mammalia it belongs. We may be led to guess at its name in that way."

"I see four sharp incisor teeth, father—two upper, and two under, as a squirrel has."

"Ah! then he is a rodent. What rodents can you remember, Ernest?"

"I do not know them all, but there are the mouse, the marmot, the squirrel, the hare, the beaver, the jerboa——"

"The jerboa!" I exclaimed, "the jerboa! now we shall have it. This is really very like a jerboa, only far larger. It must be a kangaroo, one of the class of animals which has a pouch or purse beneath the body, in which its young can take refuge. They were discovered in New Holland, by the great Captain Cook, and I congratulate you on being the first to obtain a specimen in New Switzerland!" I added, laughing, as I extemporized the name.

The kangaroo was added to our already heavy load and we proceeded slowly, arriving late at Falconhurst, but meeting with the usual bright welcome.

CHAPTER V

RANSACKING THE VESSEL

Next morning, while the breakfast was getting ready, I attended to the beautiful skin of the kangaroo, which I was anxious to preserve entire; and afterward, when Fritz had prepared everything in readiness for our trip to the wreck, I called Ernest and Jack in order to give them some parting injunctions. They, however, had disappeared directly after breakfast, and their mother could only guess, that, as we required potatoes, they might have gone to fetch a supply. I desired her to reprove them, on their return, for starting away without leave; and it was not without reluctance that I left my dear wife alone with little Franz.

Advancing steadily on our way, we crossed the bridge at Jackal River, when suddenly Jack and Ernest burst out of a hiding place and were enchanted with the startling effect of their unexpected appearance upon their unsuspecting father and brother. It was evident that they fully believed they might now go with us to the wreck.

To this notion I at once put a decided stop, although I could not find in my heart to scold the two merry rogues for their thoughtless frolic, more

especially as I particularly wished to send back a message to my wife. I instructed them to explain that, as my work on board would take up a long time, she must try to bear with our absence for a night. This I had meant to say when we parted, but my courage had failed, knowing how much she would object to such a plan, and I had resolved to return in the evening.

In consideration, however, of the importance of constructing a raft, which was my intention in going, and finishing it without a second trip, I determined to remain on board for the night, as the boys had, unintentionally, given me the chance of sending a message to that effect.

"Good-by, boys, take care of yourselves! We're off!" shouted Fritz, as I joined him in the tub-boat, and we shoved off.

The current carried us briskly out of the bay; we were very soon moored safely alongside the wreck, and scrambling up her shattered sides, stood on what remained of the deck, and began at once to lay our plans.

I wanted to make a raft fit to carry on shore a great variety of articles far too large and heavy for our present boat. A number of empty water casks seemed just what was required for a foundation; we closed them tightly, pushed them overboard, and arranging twelve of them side by side in rows of three, we firmly secured them together by means of spars, and then proceeded to lay a good substantial floor of planks, which was defended by a low

bulwark. In this way we soon had a first-rate raft, exactly suited to our purpose.

Rejoicing that we were not expected home, we now made an excellent supper from the ship's provisions, and then rested for the night on spring mattresses, a perfect luxury to us after our hard and narrow hammocks.

Next morning we actively set about loading the raft and boat: first carrying off the entire contents of our own cabins and passing on to the captain's room, we removed the furniture, as well as the doors and window-frames, with their bolts, bars and locks. We next took the officers' chests, and those belonging to the carpenter and gunsmith.

To my delight we found, most carefully packed, a number of young fruit trees: and we read on the tickets attached to them the names, so pleasant to European ears, of the apple, pear, chestnut, orange, almond, peach, apricot, plum, cherry, and vine.

The cargo, which had been destined for the supply of a distant colony, proved, in fact, a rich and almost inexhaustible treasure to us. Ironmongery, plumber's tools, lead, paint, grindstones, cart wheels, and all that was necessary for the work of a smith's forge, spades and plowshares, sacks of maize, peas, oats, and wheat, a hand-mill, and also the parts of a saw-mill so carefully numbered that, were we strong enough, it would be easy to put it up, had been stowed away.

So bewildered were we by the wealth around us that for some time we were at a loss as to what to

remove to the raft. It would be impossible to take everything; yet the first storm would complete the destruction of the ship, and we should lose all we left behind. Selecting a number of the most useful articles, however, including of course the grain and the fruit trees, we gradually loaded our raft. Fishing lines, reels, cordage, and a couple of harpoons were put on board, as well as a mariner's compass.

Early in the afternoon both our crafts were heavily laden, and we were ready to make for the shore. The voyage was begun with considerable anxiety, as, with the raft in tow, there was some danger of an accident. But the sea being calm and the wind favorable, we found we could spread the sail, and our progress was very satisfactory.

Presently, Fritz asked me for the telescope, as he had observed something curious floating at a distance. Then handing it back, he begged me to examine the object, which I soon discovered to be a turtle asleep on the water, and of course unconscious of our approach.

"Do, father, steer toward it!" exclaimed he.

I accordingly did so, that he might have a nearer look at the creature. Little did I suspect what was to follow. The lad's back was turned to me, and the broad sail was between us, so that I could not perceive his actions when, all of a sudden, I experienced a shock, and the thrill as of line running through a reel. Before I had time to call out, a second shock, and the sensation of the boat being

rapidly drawn through the water alarmed me.

"Fritz, what are you about?" cried I. "You are sending us to the bottom."

"I have him, hurrah! I have him safe!" shouted he, in eager excitement.

To my amazement, I perceived that he really had struck the tortoise with a harpoon; a rope was attached to it, and the creature was running away with us. Lowering the sail and seizing my hatchet, I hastened forward, in order to cut the line, and cast adrift at once turtle and harpoon.

"Father! do wait!" pleaded the boy, "there is no danger just yet! I promise to cut the line myself the instant it is necessary! Let us catch this turtle if we possibly can."

"My dear boy, the turtle will be a very dear bargain if he upsets all our goods into the sea, even if he does not drown us too. For Heaven's sake, be careful! I will wait a few minutes, but the minute there is danger, cut the line."

As the turtle began to make for the open sea, I hoisted the sail again; and, finding the opposition too much for it, the creature again directed its course landward, drawing us rapidly after it. The part of the shore for which the turtle was making was considerably to the left of our usual landing place. The beach there shelved very gradually, and at some distance from land we grounded with a sharp shock, but fortunately without a capsize.

The turtle was evidently greatly exhausted, and no wonder, since it had been acting the part of a

steam tug, and had been dragging at full speed a couple of heavily laden vessels. Its intention was to escape to land; but I leaped into the water, and wading up to it, dispatched it with my ax.

As we were by no means far from Falconhurst, Fritz gave notice of our approach by firing off his gun, as well as shouting loudly in his glee; and, while we were yet engaged in securing our boats and getting the turtle on shore, the whole family appeared in the distance, hastening eagerly toward us; and our new prize, together with the well-laden boat and raft, excited the liveliest interest.

Being anxious to remove some of our goods before night, the boys ran off to fetch the sledge; while I, having no anchor, contrived to moor the boats by means of some of the heavy blocks of iron we had brought.

It required our united strength to get the turtle hoisted on to the sledge, its weight being prodigious; we found it, indeed, with the addition of the sapling fruit trees, quite a sufficient load.

We then made the best of our way home, chatting merrily about our various adventures. The first thing to be done on arriving was to obtain some of the turtle's flesh and cook it for supper. To my wife this appeared necessarily a work of time, as well as of difficulty; but I turned the beast on its back, and soon detached a portion of the meat from the breast with a hatchet, by breaking the lower shell: and I then directed that it should be cooked with a little salt, shell and all.

"But let me first cut away this disgusting green fat," said my wife, with a little shudder. "See how it sticks all over the meat. No one could eat anything so nasty."

"Leave the fat, whatever you do!" exclaimed I. "Why, my dear, that is the very best part, and the delight of the epicure. If there be really too much, cut some off—it can be used as lard, and let the dogs make a supper of the refuse."

"And the handsome shell!" cried Fritz; "I should like to make a water-trough of that, to stand near the brook, and be kept always full of clear water. How useful it would be!"

"That is a capital idea," I replied.

"I was rambling in the wood this morning," said Ernest, "and came upon the sow very busy grubbing under a small bush and eating something ravenously; so I drove her away, and found a number of these roots, which I brought for you to see."

"Indeed, Ernest," I exclaimed, after taking the roots in my hand and considering them attentively, "I am inclined to believe that you have really made a brilliant discovery! If this proves to be, as I expect, the manioc root, we might lose every other eatable we possess, and yet not starve. In the West Indies, cakes called cassava bread are made from it; and, already having potatoes, we shall be very independent if we can succeed in preparing flour from these roots. Great care must be taken in the manufacture to express the juice, otherwise the flour may be injurious and even poisonous.

"If we can collect a sufficient quantity, we will attempt bread-making. I think I know how to set about it."

Finding there was still time to make another trip with the sledge, I went off with the elder boys, leaving Franz with his mother; and we all looked forward with satisfaction to the prospect of the princely supper they were to have ready for us, for our day's work had been none of the lightest. The turtle proved delicious, it was heartily enjoyed, and gave us strength to haul the mattresses we had brought from the ship up into our sleeping rooms, so that very refreshing slumbers closed the day.

Early next morning I got up without rousing any of the others, intending to pay a visit to the beach; for I had my doubts about the safety of my vessels on the open shore.

My fears as to the safety of the boats were soon dispelled, for they were all right; and, being in haste to return, the load I collected from their freight was but a light one, and the donkey willingly trotted home with it, he, as well as I, being uncommonly ready for breakfast. Approaching the tree, not a sound was to be heard, not a soul was to be seen, although it was broad day; and great was my good wife's surprise, when, roused by the clatter and hullabaloo I made, she started up, and became aware of the late hour!

"What can have made us oversleep ourselves like this?" she exclaimed. "It must be the fault of

those mattresses; they are delightful, but really too lulling; see, the children are sound asleep still."

"Now for prayers and breakfast," I called, "and then off to work. I must have our cargo landed in time to get the boats off with the next tide."

By dint of downright hard work, we accomplished this, and I got on board with Fritz as soon as they were afloat; the rest turned homeward, but Jack lingered behind with such imploring looks that I could not resist taking him with me.

My intention had been simply to take the vessels round to the harbor in Safety Bay, but the calm sea and fine weather tempted me to make another trip to the wreck.

To Jack the pleasure of hunting about in the hold was novel and charming, and very soon a tremendous rattling and clattering heralded his approach with a wheel-barrow, in the highest spirits at his good fortune in having found such a capital thing in which to bring home potatoes.

He was followed by Fritz, whose news was still more important. He had found, carefully packed and enclosed within partitions, what appeared to be the separate parts of a pinnacle, with rigging and fittings complete, even to a couple of small brass guns. This was a great discovery, and I hastened to see if the lad was right. Indeed he was, but my pleasure was qualified by a sense of the arduous task it would be to put such a craft together so as to be fit for sea. For the present we had barely

time to get something to eat and hurry into the boat, where were collected our new acquisitions, namely, a copper boiler, iron plates, tobacco-graters, two grindstones, a small barrel of powder, and another of flints, two wheel-barrows, besides Jack's, which he kept under his own especial care.

On our arrival at Falconhurst, each trundling a wheel-barrow, the examination of our burdens caused great excitement: the tobacco-graters and iron plates evidently puzzling everybody.

"Please to treat my graters and iron plates with respect, however, because they are to be the means of providing you with the first fresh bread you have seen this many a long day," I finally said.

"What possible connection can there be between bread and tobacco-graters?" asked my wife. "I cannot imagine what you mean, and to talk of bread where there are no ovens is only tantalizing."

"Ah, you must not expect real loaves," said I. "But on these flat iron plates I can bake flat cakes or scones, which will be excellent bread."

This the mother willingly undertook to do, but she evidently had not much faith in my powers as a baker, and I saw her set on a good potful of potatoes before beginning to work, as though to make sure of a meal without depending on my bread.

Spreading a piece of sailcloth on the ground, I summoned my boys to set to work. Each took a grater and a supply of well-washed manioc root, and when all were seated round the cloth—"Once, twice, thrice! Off!" cried I, beginning to rub a root

as hard as I could against the rough surface of my grater. My example was instantly followed by the whole party, amid bursts of merriment, as each remarked the funny attitude and odd gestures of his neighbors while vehemently rubbing, rasping, grating, and grinding down the roots allotted to him.

Our supply of roots being reduced to damp powder, a canvas bag was filled with it, and tying it tightly up, I attempted to squeeze it, but soon found that mechanical aid was necessary in order to express the moisture. My arrangements for this purpose were as follows: A strong, straight beam was made flat on one side, smooth planks were laid across two of the lower roots of our tree; on these we placed the sack, above the sack another plank, and over that the long beam; one end was passed under a root near the sack, the other projected far forward. And to that we attached all the heaviest weights we could think of, such as an anvil, iron bars, and masses of lead. The consequent pressure on the bag was enormous, and the sap flowed from it to the ground.

"Will this stuff keep any time?" inquired my wife, who came to see how we were getting on. "Or must all this great bagful be used at once?"

"Not at all," I replied; "once dry, the flour in barrels will keep fresh a long time."

"Do you think we might begin now, father?" said Fritz.

"Certainly," said I. "But I shall only make one cake to-day for an experiment; we must see how it

agrees with Master Knips and the hens before we set up a bakehouse in regular style."

I took out a couple of handfuls of flour for this purpose, and with a stick loosened and stirred the remainder, which I intended should again be pressed. While an iron plate, placed over a good fire, was getting hot, I mixed the meal with water and a little salt, kneaded it well, and forming a thickish cake, laid it on the hot plate, when one side presently becoming a nice yellow-brown color, it was turned and was quickly baked.

It smelt so delicious that the boys quite envied the two hens and the monkey, who were selected as the subjects of this interesting experiment, and they silently watched them gobbling up the bits of cake I gave them.

Next morning everyone expressed the tenderest concern as to the health of Knips and the hens; and lively pleasure was in every countenance when Jack, who made the visit of inquiry, brought news of their perfect good health and spirits.

No time was now to be lost, and the bread-baking commenced in earnest. A large fire was kindled, the plates heated, the meal made into cakes, each of the boys busily preparing his own, and watching the baking most eagerly. Mistakes occurred, of course; some of the bread was burnt, some not done enough; but a pile of nice, tempting cakes was at length ready, and with plenty of good milk we breakfasted right royally, and in high spirits at our success.

CHAPTER VI

THE PINNACE IS BUILT

I was bent on acquiring possession of the beautiful pinnacle, and aware that our united efforts would be required to do the necessary work, I persuaded the mother to let me go in force with all her boys except Franz.

When we got on board, we made a minute inspection of the pinnacle.

I came to the conclusion that difficulties, well-nigh insuperable, lay between me and safe possession of the beautiful little vessel. She lay in a most un-get-at-able position at the further end of the hold, stowed in so confined and narrow a space that it was impossible to think of fitting the parts together there. At the same time these parts were so heavy that removing them to a convenient place piece by piece was equally out of the question.

As my eyes became used to the dim light which entered the compartment through a chink or crevice here and there, I perceived how carefully every part of the pinnacle was arranged and marked with numbers, so that if only I could bestow sufficient time on the work, and contrive space in which to execute it, I might reasonably hope for success.

"Room! room to work in, boys! that's what we need in the first place!" I cried. "Fetch axes, and let us break down the compartment and clear space all round."

To work we all went, yet evening drew near, and but little impression was made on the mass of woodwork around us. We had to acknowledge that an immense amount of labor and perseverance would be required before we could call ourselves the owners of the useful and elegant little craft, which lay within this vast hulk like a fossil shell embedded in a rock.

Preparations for returning to shore were hastily made, and we landed without much relish for the long walk to Falconhurst, when, to our great surprise and pleasure, we found the mother and little Franz at Tentholm awaiting us. She had resolved to take up her quarters there during the time we should be engaged on the wreck. "In that way you will live nearer your work, and I shall not quite lose sight of you!" said she, with a pleasant smile.

Our days were now spent in hard work on board, first cutting and clearing an open space round the pinnacle, and then putting the parts together.

At length, with incredible labor, all was completed. The pinnacle stood actually ready to be launched, but imprisoned within massive wooden walls which defied our strength. No possible means of setting her free could I conceive, and I was almost in despair, when an idea occurred to

me which, if I could carry it out, would effect her release without further labor or delay.

Without explaining my purpose, I got a large cast-iron mortar, filled it with gunpowder, secured a block of oak to the top, through which I pierced a hole for the insertion of the match, and this great petard I so placed that when it exploded it should blow out the side of the vessel next which the pin-nace lay. Then securing it with chains, that the recoil might do no damage, I told the boys I was going ashore earlier than usual, and calmly desired them to get into the boat. Lighting a match I had prepared, and which would burn some time before reaching the powder, I hastened after them and we made for the land.

We brought the raft close in shore and began to unload it; the other boat I did not haul up, but kept her ready to put off at a moment's notice; my anxiety was unobserved by anyone, as I listened with strained nerves for the expected sound. It came!—a flash! a mighty roar—a grand burst of smoke!

My wife and children, terror-stricken, turned their eyes toward the sea, whence the startling noise came, and then, in fear and wonder, looked to me for some explanation. "Perhaps," said the mother, as I did not speak, "perhaps you have left a light burning near some of the gunpowder, and an explosion has taken place."

"Not at all unlikely," replied I quietly; "we had a fire below when we were caulking the seams of

the pinnacle. I shall go off at once and see what has happened. Will anyone come?"

The boys needed no second invitation, but sprang into the boat, while I lingered to re-assure my wife by whispering a few words of explanation, and then joining them, we pulled for the wreck at a more rapid rate than we ever had done before.

No alteration had taken place in the side at which we usually boarded her, and we pulled round to the further side, where a marvelous sight awaited us. A huge rent appeared, the decks and bulwarks were torn open, the water was covered with floating wreckage—all seemed in ruins; and the compartment where the pinnacle rested was fully revealed to view. There sat the little beauty, to all appearance uninjured; and the boys, whose attention was taken up with the melancholy scene of ruin and confusion around them, were astonished to hear me shout in enthusiastic delight: "Hurrah! she is ours! The lovely pinnacle is won!"

The boys gazed at me for a moment, and then guessing my secret, "You planned it yourself, you clever, cunning father! Oh, that machine we helped to make was on purpose to blow it up!" cried they; and eagerly they followed me into the shattered opening, where, to my intense satisfaction, I found everything as I could wish, and the captive in no way a sufferer from the violent measures I had adopted for her deliverance.

It was evident that the launch could now be effected without much trouble; I had been careful

to place rollers beneath the keel, so that by means of levers and pulleys we might, with our united strength, move her forward toward the water. A rope was attached by which to regulate the speed of the descent, and then, all hands putting their shoulders to the work, the pinnacle began to slide from the stocks, and finally slipped gently and steadily into the water, where she floated as if conscious it was her native element; while we, wild with excitement, cheered and waved enthusiastically. We then only remained long enough to secure our prize carefully at the most sheltered point, and went back to Tentholt, where we accounted for the explosion.

These days were devoted to completing the rigging, the mounting of her two little brass guns, and all necessary arrangements about the pinnacle. It was wonderful what martial ardor was awakened by the possession of a vessel armed with two real guns.

The pinnacle was fully equipped and ready to sail, while yet no idea of the surprise we were preparing for her had dawned upon my wife, and I permitted the boys, who had kept the secret so well, to fire a salute when we entered the bay.

Casting off from the ship, and spreading the sail, our voyage began. The pinnacle glided swiftly through the water. I stood at the helm, Ernest and Jack manned the guns, and Fritz gave the word of command, "Fire!" Bang! bang! rattled out a thrilling report, which echoed and re-echoed

among the cliffs, followed by our shouts and hurrahs.

The mother and her little boy rushed hastily forward from near the tent, and we could plainly see their alarm and astonishment; but speedily recognizing us, they waved joyfully, and came quickly to the landing place to meet us.

By skillful management we brought the pinnace near a projection of the bank, and Fritz assisted his mother to come on board, where, breathless with haste and excitement, she exclaimed, "You dear, horrid, wonderful people, shall I scold you or praise you? You have frightened me out of my wits! To see a beautiful little ship come sailing in was startling enough, for I could not conceive who might be on board, but the report of your guns made me tremble with fear—and had I not recognized your voices directly after, I should have run away with Franz—Heaven knows where."

After the pinnace had been shown off, and received the admiration she deserved, while our industry, skill, and perseverance met with boundless praise: "Now," said my wife, "you must come with me, and see how little Franz and I have improved our time every day of your absence."

We all landed, and with great curiosity followed the mother up the river toward the cascade; where to our astonishment, we found a garden neatly laid out in beds and walks; and she continued, "We don't frighten people by firing salutes in honor of our performances; although, by and by, I too

shall want fire in a peaceable form. Look at my beds of lettuce and cabbages, my rows of beans and peas! Think what delicious dinners I shall be able to cook for you, and give me credit for my diligence."

Taking an ample supply of everything we should require at Falconhurst, we were soon comfortably re-established in that charming abode, its peaceful shade seeming more delightful than ever, after the heat and hard work we had lately undergone.

The needful work of setting out the little fruit trees was done at once, after which was proposed an excursion to the Calabash Wood, in order to manufacture a large supply of vessels and utensils of all sorts and sizes.

Everyone was inclined for this expedition; all sorts of arrangements were made for an early start next day. The mother and Franz were to be of the party, and their equipment took some time, for we meant to make a grand family excursion, attended by the domestic pets and servants!

By sunrise we were all astir, and everything quickly made ready for a start.

The sledge, loaded with ammunition and baskets of provisions, and drawn by the donkey, was to be used for carrying home our gourd manufactures, as well as any other prize we might fall in with.

Turk, as usual, headed the procession, clad in his coat of mail.

Then came the boys with their guns and game bags. Their mother and I followed, and behind

trotted Juno, not in very good spirits, poor dog! because Master Knips, who had no idea of being left alone, must needs ride on her back.

On this occasion I took two guns with me, one loaded with shot for game, another with ball for our defense against beasts of prey.

Flamingo Marsh was quickly crossed, and we next arrived at the Monkey Grove, which was the scene of the tragi-comic adventure by which Fritz became the guardian of the orphan ape.

While he amused us all by a lively and graphic description of the scene, Ernest was standing apart under a splendid cocoanut palm, gazing in fixed admiration at the grand height of the stem, and its beautiful, graceful crown of leaves. The cluster of nuts beneath these evidently added interest to the spectacle, for, drawing quietly near him, I heard a long-drawn sigh, and the words: "It's awfully high! I wish one would fall down!"

Scarcely had he uttered these words, than, as if by magic, down plumped a huge nut at his feet.

The boy was quite startled, and sprang aside, looking timidly upward, when, to my surprise, down came another.

"Why, this is just like the fairy tale of the wish-cap!" cried Ernest. "My wish is granted as soon as formed!"

"I suspect the fairy in this instance is more anxious to pelt us and drive us away than to bestow dainty gifts upon us," said I. "I think

there is most likely a cross-grained old ape sitting up among those shadowy leaves and branches."

Anxious to discover what was in the tree, we all surrounded it, gaping and gazing upward with curious eyes.

"Hullo! I see him!" shouted Fritz presently. "Oh, a hideous creature! what can it be? Flat, round, as big as a plate, and with a pair of horrid claws! Here he comes! He is going to creep down the tree!"

At this, little Franz slipped behind his mother, Ernest took a glance round to mark a place of retreat, Jack raised the butt-end of his gun, and every eye was fixed on the trunk of the tree, down which a large land-crab commenced a leisurely descent. As it approached within reach, Jack hit at it boldly, when it suddenly dropped the remaining distance, and opening its great claws, sidled after him with considerable rapidity, upon which he fairly turned tail and ran. We all burst into a roar of laughter, which soon made him face about, and then, to our infinite amusement, the little fellow prepared for a fresh onset; laying down all he was carrying, pulling off his jacket and spreading it wide out in both hands, he returned to the charge, suddenly threw his garment over the creature, wrapped it well round it, and then pummeled it with all the strength of his fists.

For a few minutes I could do nothing but laugh, but then running to him with my hatchet, I struck several sharp blows on his bundle, which we opened

carefully, and found within the land-crab perfectly dead.

After struggling onward for a short time, we emerged from the thickets into open ground, and saw the calabash trees in the distance. As we drew near, their curious appearance and singular fruit caused much surprise and also amusement, for we were speedily established among the trees, where, as I chose and cut down the gourds most likely to be useful, everyone engaged merrily in the work of cutting, carving, sawing, and scooping some manner of dish, bowl, cup, jar, or platter, according to his several taste or ability.

We were to dine here, and after a time Fritz and Jack began to prepare a fireplace, their great ambition being to heat the stones red hot, and cook the crab in a hollow gourd.

The cooking operations came to a stand soon after the fire was lighted, for it appeared that we had no more water in the jars we had brought, so the boys proposed to go in search of a spring and I agreed to accompany them.

Very soon after our exploration began, Ernest, who was in front, turned with a face of terror, shouting, "A wild boar! an immense wild boar, father! Do come, quick!"

"After him, lads, after him!" cried I, hurrying forward. "Call the dogs! stand ready to fire!"

We pressed through the bushes to the spot where Ernest had seen the creature. The ground was grubbed up, and some potatoes lay about, showing

that we had disturbed him at his mid-day meal. The dogs eagerly pushed on, and by the sounds we heard had evidently attacked the boar at no great distance. Terrific barking, snarling, and grunting guided us to the scene of action, and we beheld our mastiffs one on each side of a large respectable-looking pig, holding on by the great ears, while the animal, on seeing us, appeared rather to beseech our interference than to propose to offer a desperate resistance.

In a moment the truth became apparent! The captive grunter was no fierce native of the forest, but our own runaway sow! Our excitement had been wound to so high a pitch that the discovery was quite a shock, and we felt half angry with the creature who had disappointed us; then the absurdity of the whole thing made us laugh heartily, and calling off the dogs, the old lady was released from her ignominious position.

All this time not a drop of water had we seen, and our own thirst increasing, we felt eager to procure some before returning to our resting-place.

Jack preceded us, and we made our way toward a high rock, which rose above the thickets, when he suddenly startled us by a loud cry of "A crocodile! father! father! A crocodile!"

"Nonsense, boy! A crocodile, of all things, in this dry, parched forest, where we can't get so much as a mouthful of water!"

On advancing to where Jack stood, I perceived that his mistake was not so very silly after all, for

I beheld an iguana, one of the largest of the lizard species, and a truly formidable-looking fellow.

In another moment Fritz would have fired, but arresting his hand, "Your shot," I said, "would probably only wound the animal, and being extremely tenacious of life, it would certainly escape; we must gain possession of the sleeping beauty by a gentler method."

"You are not going to kiss it, are you, father?" asked Jack, with a grin.

I tried to rebuke him for his impertinence, but, failing, I commenced operations. I first attached a cord and running-noose to a stout stick, and holding a light switch in my other hand, I began to approach the creature with soft, slow steps, while the boys looked on with the utmost curiosity.

Presently I began very softly to whistle a sweet, yet very lively air, which I continued more and more distinctly as I drew near the lizard; until, awaking, it seemed to listen with pleasure—raising its head as though better to catch the sounds, or to discover whence they came.

When near enough, I began gently to stroke and tickle him with the wand, continuing to whistle the prettiest tunes I could think of; and the lizard gave signs of pleasurable contentment, stretching his limbs and moving his tail in token of enjoyment.

Suddenly, availing myself of a movement of his head, I cast the noose over it, drew the cord tight, and placing my foot on the body, I was about to kill it by piercing the nostril—almost the only

vulnerable part in this singular reptile—when Jack received such a slap from its tail, which was furiously driving in all directions, as sent him rolling over like a ninepin. At the same time he opened his jaws, when the boys took fright at the row of sharp teeth, and thinking that the sooner he was dead the better, were for battering him with sticks; but I, assuring them my method would kill him more quickly and without pain, thrust my rod into his nostril, on which the blood flowed and the lizard soon expired.

Now came the question of how we were to carry this unwieldy burden. I had a great dislike to killing any creature and leaving it useless behind me; so, without more ado, I fairly took it on my back, and marched off with it.

As we came toward the Calabash Wood, we could hear the voices of the deserted mother and child calling us in anxious tones. We shouted joyously in reply, and our appearance afforded them welcome relief from their fears, although the dreadful creature on my back startled them not a little.

CHAPTER VII

CANDLE MAKING

The first thing to be done on the following day was to return to the Calabash Wood, to fetch the sledge with the dishes, bowls, and baskets we had made.

Fritz alone accompanied me. I desired the other boys to remain with their mother, intending to explore beyond the chain of rocky hills, and thinking a large party undesirable on the occasion.

The sledge was quite safe where we had left it. Leaving Calabash Wood behind us, we advanced over ground covered with manioc, potatoes, and many plants unknown to us; pleasant streamlets watered the fruitful soil, and the view on all sides was open and agreeable.

Some bushes attracted my notice, loaded with small white berries, of peculiar appearance like wax, and very sticky when plucked. I recognized in this a plant called by botanists *Myrica cerifera*, and with much pleasure explained to Fritz that, by melting and straining these berries, we might easily succeed in making candles, and afford very great satisfaction to the mother, who did not at all approve of having to lay her work aside and retire

to rest the moment the sun set. Having the ass with us, we lost no time in gathering berries enough to fill one of the large canvas bags he carried, and we then continued our route.

Arriving presently at a grove of tall trees, with very strong, broad thick leaves, we paused to examine them; they bore a round, fig-like fruit, full of little seeds and of a sour, harsh taste.

Fritz saw some gummy resin exuding from cracks in the bark, and it reminded him of the boyish delight afforded by collecting gum from cherry-trees at home, so that he must needs stop to scrape off as much as he could. He rejoined me presently, attempting to soften what he had collected in his hands; but finding it would not work like gum, he was about to fling it away, when he suddenly found that he could stretch it and that it sprang back to its original size.

"Oh, father, only look! this gum is quite elastic! Can it possibly be india-rubber?"

"What!" cried I; "let me see it! a valuable discovery that would be, indeed; and I do believe you are perfectly right!"

Soon after making this discovery, we reached the cocoanut wood, and saw the bay extending before us, and the great promontory we called Cape Disappointment, which hitherto had always bounded our excursions.

In passing through the wood, I remarked a smaller sort of palm, which, among its grand companions, I had not previously noticed. One of

these had been broken by the wind, and I saw that the pith had a peculiar mealy appearance, and I felt convinced that this was the world-renowned sago-palm.

No further adventure befell us, and we arrived in the evening at Falconhurst, where an excellent supper was ready for us, and with thankful hearts we enjoyed it together; then, ascending to our tree-castle, and drawing up the ladder after us, we betook ourselves to the repose well earned and greatly needed after this fatiguing day.

The idea of candle-making seemed to have taken the fancy of all the boys; and next morning they woke, one after the other, with the word candle on their lips.

"So be it," said I; "let us become chandlers."

We first picked off the berries and threw them into a large shallow iron vessel placed on the fire. The green, sweet-scented wax was rapidly melted, rising to the surface of the juice yielded by the berries. This we skimmed off and placed in a separate pot by the fire, ready for use; repeating the operation several times, until we had collected sufficient liquid wax for our purpose. I then took the wicks my wife had prepared, and dipped them one after the other into the wax, handing them as I did so to Fritz, who hung them up on a bush to dry. The coating thus obtained was not very thick; but, by repeating the operation several times, they at length assumed very fair proportions, and became real sturdy candles. Our wax being at an end, we

hung these in a cool, shady place to harden; and that same night we sat up like civilized beings three whole hours after sunset, and Falconhurst was for the first time brilliantly illuminated.

"You are indeed clever," said my wife; "I only wish that with your ingenuity you would show me how to make butter."

"I think that perhaps I can help you," I replied, after a little consideration; "not that I can claim the honor of the invention; that is due to the Hot-tentots. Jack, bring me one of our gourd bottles."

I took the gourd, one of those I had previously prepared, with a small hole at one end and well hollowed out and cleaned; this I partially filled with cream and then corked up the hole tightly.

"Here, boys," said I, "you can continue the operation, while I turn carpenter and make a cart to take the place of our sledge."

I gave them their directions, and then set about my own work. They fixed four posts in the ground, and to them fastened a square piece of sail-cloth by four cords attached to the corners. In this cradle they placed the gourd of cream, and each taking a side rolled it backward and forward continuously for half an hour.

"Now," I cried, looking up from my work, "open the gourd and take the contents to your mother, with my compliments."

They did so; and my good wife's eyes were delighted with the sight of a large lump of capital fresh butter.

With my sons' assistance the cart was in time completed; a clumsy vehicle it was, but strong enough for any purpose to which we might put it, and, as it proved, of immense use to us in collecting the harvest.

Tentholm had been the subject of serious thoughts to me for some time past, and I now turned all my attention thither. It was not my ambition to make it beautiful, but to form of it a safe place of refuge in a case of emergency. My first care, therefore, was to plant a thick, prickly hedge capable of protecting us from any wild animal, and forming a tolerable obstacle to the attack of even savages, should they appear. Not satisfied with this, however, we fortified the bridge, and on a couple of hillocks mounted two guns which we brought from the wreck, and with whose angry mouths we might bark defiance at any enemy, man or beast.

I soon saw that this hard work was developing in the boys remarkable strength, and this I encouraged by making them practice running, leaping, climbing, and swimming; I also saw, however, that it was having a less satisfactory effect upon their clothes, which, though a short time before remarkably neat, were now, in spite of the busy mother's mending and patching, most untidy and disreputable. I determined, therefore, to pay another visit to the wreck, to replenish our wardrobe and to see how much longer the vessel was likely to hold together. Three of the boys and I went off

in the pinnace. The old ship seemed in much the same condition as when we had left her; a few more planks had gone, but that was all.

"Come, boys," cried I, "not an article of the slightest value must be left on board; rummage her out to the very bottom of her hold."

They took me at my word: sailors' chests, bales of cloth and linen, a couple of small guns, ball and shot, tables, benches, window shutters, bolts and locks, barrels of pitch, all were soon loaded on the pinnace.

I left two barrels of gunpowder on board the wreck, and as we left it, lighted the fuse.

The supper was laid outside the tent, at a spot from whence we might obtain a good view of the wreck. Darkness came on. Suddenly a vivid pillar of fire rose from the black waters, a sullen roar boomed across the sea, and we knew that our good old ship was no more.

We had planned the destruction of the vessel; we knew that it was for the best; and yet that night we went to bed with a feeling of sadness in our hearts, as though we had lost a dear old friend.

Next morning all our sadness was dispelled, and it was with pleasure that we saw the shore lined with a rich store of planks and beams, the remnants of the wreck.

As we returned to Falconhurst I noticed that several young trees in our avenue were considerably bent by the wind, and this resolved me to make an expedition next day to cut bamboos for their sup-

port. As Fritz was the only one besides myself who had visited Cape Disappointment and the surrounding country, my wife and the younger boys begged hard to be allowed to accompany me. I consented; and next morning we started, bringing with us the cart, drawn by the cow and ass, and laden with everything necessary for an expedition of several days.

We reached the wax trees, and there I called a halt, for I wished to gather a sack or two of the berries that we might renew our stock of candles.

“Now for the caoutchouc tree,” said I; “now for the waterproof boots and leggings to keep your feet dry, Ernest.” To the caoutchouc tree we directed our steps, and were soon busily engaged in stabbing the bark and placing vessels beneath to catch the sap. We again moved forward; and, crossing the palm wood, entered upon a delightful plain bounded on one side by an extensive field of waving sugar cane, on the other by a thicket of bamboos and lovely palms, while in front stretched the shining sea, calm and noiseless.

Our beasts were quickly unyoked, the tent arranged, a large fire lit, supper started, and we dispersed in various directions, some to cut bamboos, and some to collect sugar-cane.

While we were enjoying our supper before our tent, our donkey, who had been quietly browsing near us, suddenly set up a loud bray, and, without the least apparent cause, pricked up his ears, threw up his heels, and galloped off into the thicket of

bamboos. We followed for a short distance, and I sent the dogs in chase, but they returned without our friend, and, as it was late, we were obliged to abandon the chase.

A bright morning awoke us early, and I rose and looked out, thinking that perhaps our poor donkey might have been attracted by the light of the fires, and have returned. Alas! not a sign of him was to be seen. As we could not afford to lose so valuable a beast, I determined to leave no attempt untried to regain him. We hurriedly breakfasted, and, as I required the dogs to assist me in the search, I left my elder sons to protect their mother, and bade Jack get ready for a day's march.

For an hour or more we trudged onward, directed by the print of the ass's hoofs. Sometimes we lost the track for a while, and then again discovered it as we reached softer soil. Finally this guide failed us altogether, for the donkey seemed to have joined a herd of some larger animals, with whose hoof-prints his had mingled.

We at length reached the border of a wide plain, and on it, in the distance, I could see a herd of animals browsing on the rich grass. It struck me that it might be the very herd to which our good donkey had joined himself; and, wishing to ascertain whether this was so, I resolved to make a detour through a bamboo marsh, and get as near as possible to the animals without disturbing them. The bamboos were huge, many of them over thirty feet in height; and, as we made our way through

them, I remembered an account of the giant cane of South America, which is greatly prized by the Indians on account of its extreme usefulness; the reeds themselves make masts for their canoes, while each joint will form a cask or box. I was delighted, for I had little doubt that the bamboos we were among were of the same species. I explained this to Jack, and as we discussed the possibility of cutting one down and carrying a portion of it home, we reached the border of the marsh, and emerged upon the plain. There we suddenly found ourselves face to face with the herd which we sought—a herd of buffaloes. They looked up and stared at us inquisitively, but without moving. Jack would have fired, but I checked him. “Back to the thicket,” I said, “and keep back the dogs!”

We began to retreat, but before we were again under cover the dogs joined us; and, in spite of our shouts and efforts to restrain them, they dashed forward and seized a buffalo calf. This was a signal to the whole herd to attack us. They bellowed loudly, pawed the ground, and tore it up with their horns, and then dashed madly toward us. We had not time to step behind a rock before the leader was upon us. So close was he that my gun was useless. I drew a pistol and fired. He fell dead at my feet. His fall checked the advance of the rest. They halted, sniffed the air, turned tail, and galloped off across the plain. They were gone, but the dogs still held gallantly to the calf. They dragged and tussled with him, but with their utmost efforts

they could not bring him to the ground. How to assist them without shooting the poor beast I knew not; and this I was unwilling to do, for I hoped that, if we could but capture him alive, we might in time manage to tame him, and use him as a beast of burden. Jack's clever little head, however, suddenly devised a plan for their aid, and with his usual promptitude, he at once put it into execution. He unwound his lasso, which was coiled round his body, and, as the young bull flung up his heels, he cast it and caught him by his hind legs. The noose drew tight, and in a twinkling the beast was upon the ground. We fastened the other end of the cord around a stout bamboo, called off the dogs, and the animal was at our mercy.

"Now we have got him," said Jack, as he looked at the poor beast, lying panting on the ground, "what are we to do with him?"

"I will show you," said I; "help me to fasten his fore-legs together, and you shall see the next operation."

The bull, thus secured, could not move; and while Jack held his head I drew my knife and pierced the cartilage of his nose, and when the blood flowed less freely, passed a stout cord through the hole. I felt some repugnance at thus paining the animal, but it was a case of necessity, and I could not hesitate. We united the ends of the cord, freed the animal, set him upon his legs, and, subdued and overawed, he followed us without resistance. I now turned my attention to the dead buffalo, but

as I could not then skin it, I contented myself with cutting off the most delicate parts, its tongue, and a couple of steaks, and, packing them in salt in my wallet, abandoned the rest to the dogs. They fell upon it greedily, and we retired under the shade to enjoy a meal after our hard work.

Both we and the dogs were at length satisfied, and as it was getting late, I determined to give up for the present the search for the ass, and to return to our camp.

The sight of the new animal delighted the children immensely, and in their opinion amply compensated for the loss of our poor donkey. Jack had to answer a host of questions concerning his capture, and to give a minute account of the affray with the buffaloes.

Suppertime arrived, and as we sat at that meal, for which Jack and I were heartily thankful, my wife and her party proceeded to give an account of their day's work.

Ernest had discovered a sago-palm, and had, after much labor, contrived to fell it. Franz and his mother had collected dry wood, of which a huge heap now stood before the tent, sufficient to keep up a fire all the rest of the time we should stay on the spot. Fritz had gone off shooting and had secured a good bag. While they had been thus variously employed, a troop of apes had visited the tent, and when they returned, they found the place ransacked and turned upside down. The provisions were eaten and gnawed, the potatoes thrown about,

the milk drunk and spilt; every box had been peeped into, every pot and pan had been divested of its lid; the palisade round the hut had been partly destroyed, nothing had been left untouched.

After matters had been again arranged, Fritz had gone down to the shore, and, among the rocks at Cape Disappointment, had discovered a young eaglet which Ernest declared to be a Malabar or Indian eagle; he was much pleased with his discovery, and I recommended him to bring the bird up and try to train it to hunt as a falcon.

At daybreak we were on foot, and began to prepare for a return to Falconhurst.

"You are not going to despise my sago, I hope," said Ernest; "you have no idea what a trouble it was to cut it down, and I have been thinking too, that, if we could but split the tree, we might make a couple of long useful troughs, which might, I think, be made to carry water from Jackal River to Tenthelm. Is my plan worth consideration?"

"Indeed it is," I replied; "and at all events we must not abandon such a valuable prize as a sago palm. I would put off our departure for a day rather than leave it behind."

We went to the palm, and with the tools we had with us attempted to split the trunk. We first sawed off the upper end, and then with an ax and saw managed to insert a wedge. This accomplished, our task was less difficult, for with a heavy mallet we forced the wedge in further and further, until at length the trunk was split in twain. From

one half of the trunk we then removed the pith, disengaging it, with difficulty, from the tough wood fibres; at each end, however, I left a portion of the pith untouched, thus forming a trough in which to work the sago.

"Now, boys," said I, when we had removed the pith from the other half of the trunk, "off with your coats and turn up your shirt-sleeves; I am going to teach you to knead."

They were all delighted, and even little Franz begged to be allowed to help. Ernest brought a couple of pitchers of water, and throwing it in amongst the pith, we set to work right heartily. As the dough was formed and properly kneaded, I handed it to the mother, who spread it out on a cloth in the sun to dry. This new occupation kept us busy until the evening, and when it was at length completed we loaded the cart with the sago, a store of cocoanuts, and our other possessions, that we might be ready to start early on the following morning. As the sun rose above the horizon, we packed up our tent and set forth, a goodly caravan. I thought it unfair to the cow to make her drag such a load as we now had alone, and determined if possible to make the young buffalo take the place of our lost donkey. After some persuasion he consented, and soon put his strength to the work and brought the cart along famously to Falconhurst.

The animals were delighted to see us back again, and received us with manifestations of joy, but looked askance at the new pets. The eagle espe-

cially came in for shy glances, and promised to be no favorite. Fritz, however, determined that his pet should at present do no harm, secured him by the leg to a root of a fig tree and uncovered his eyes. In a moment the aspect of the bird was changed; with his sight returned all his savage instincts, he flapped his wings, raised his head, darted to the full length of his chain, and before anyone could prevent him seized an unfortunate parrot, which stood near, and tore it to pieces. Fritz's anger rose at the sight, and he was about to put an end to the savage bird.

"Stop," said Ernest, "don't kill the poor creature, he is but following his natural instincts. Take a pipe and tobacco, and send the smoke all around his head, so that he must inhale it; by degrees he will become stupefied, and his savage nature from that moment subdued."

Fritz was rather inclined to ridicule the plan, but, knowing that Ernest generally had a good reason for anything of the sort that he proposed, he consented to make the attempt. He soon seated himself beneath the bird, who still struggled furiously, and puffed cloud after cloud upward, and as each cloud circled round the eagle's head he became quieter and quieter, until he sat quite still, gazing stupidly at the young smoker.

"Capital!" cried Fritz, as he hooded the bird, "capital, Ernest; he is conquered."

CHAPTER VIII

PROVISIONS FOR WINTER

"I wish," said my wife one day, "that you would invent some other plan for climbing to the nest above us; I think that the nest itself is perfect—I really wish for nothing better, but I should like to be able to get to it without scaling that dreadful ladder every time; could you not make a flight of steps to reach it?"

"It would be impossible, I am afraid," said I, "to make stairs outside, but within the trunk it might be done. Did you not tell me the other day that you noticed bees coming from a hole in the tree?"

"Oh yes," said little Franz, "and I went to look at them and one flew right against my face and stung me, and I almost cried, but I didn't."

"Brave little boy," said I. "Well, now if the trunk be sufficiently hollow to contain a swarm of bees, it may be, for all we can tell, hollow the greater part of its length."

Master Jack, practical as usual, instantly sprang to his feet to put my conjecture to the proof. The rest followed his example, and they were all soon climbing about like squirrels, peeping into the hole,

and tapping the wood to discover by sound how far down the cavity extended.

They forgot, in their eagerness, who were the tenants of this interesting trunk. They were soon reminded of it, however, for the bees, disturbed by this unusual noise, with an angry buzz burst out, and in an instant attacked the causers of the annoyance; they swarmed round them, stung them on the hands, face, and neck, settled in their hair, and pursued them as they ran to me for assistance. It was with difficulty that we got rid of the angry insects and were able to attend to the boys. I then took a large calabash gourd, for I intended to make a beehive, that, when we had driven the insects from their present abode, we might not lose them entirely. The lower half of the gourd I flattened, I then cut an arched opening in the front for a doorway, made a straw roof as a protection from the rain and heat, and the little house was completed.

Nothing more, however, could then be done, for the irritated bees were still angrily buzzing round the tree. I waited till dark, and then, when all the bees had again returned to their trunk, with Fritz's assistance I carefully stopped up every hole in the tree with wet clay, that the bees might not issue forth the next morning before we could begin operations. Very early were we up and at work. I first took a hollow cane, and inserted one end through the clay into the tree; down this tube with pipe and tobacco I smoked most furiously.

The humming and buzzing that went on within was tremendous. By the time I had finished the second pipe all was still; the bees were stupefied.

"Now then, Fritz," said I, "quick, with a hammer and chisel, and stand here beside me."

He was up in a moment, and, together, we cut a small door by the side of the hole; this door, however, we did not take out, but we left it attached by one corner that it might be removed at a moment's notice; then giving the bees a final dose of tobacco smoke, we opened it.

Carefully but rapidly we removed the insects, as they clung in clusters to the sides of the tree, and placed them in the hive prepared for their reception. As rapidly I then took every atom of wax and honey from their storehouse, and put it in a cask I had made ready for the purpose.

The bees were now safely removed from the trunk, but I could not tell whether, when they revived from their temporary stupor, they might not refuse to occupy the house with which I had presented them, and insist on returning to their old quarters. To prevent the possibility of this occurrence, I took a quantity of tobacco, and placing it upon a board nailed horizontally within the trunk, I lighted it and allowed it to burn slowly, that the fumes might fill the cavity. It was well I did so, for, as the bees returned to consciousness, they left their pretty hive and buzzed away to the trunk of the tree. They seemed astonished at finding this uninhabitable, and an immense deal of noisy humming

ensued. Round and round they flew, backward and forward between the gourd and tree, now settling here and now there, until, at length, after due consideration, they took possession of the hive and abandoned their former habitation to us, the invaders of their territory.

The internal architecture of the tree had now to be attended to, and early the following morning we prepared for the laborious task. A door had first to be made, so at the base of the trunk we cut away the bark and formed an opening just the size of the door we had brought from the captain's cabin, and which, hinges and all, was ready to be hung. The clearing of the rotten wood from the center of the trunk occupied us some time, but at length we had the satisfaction of seeing it entirely accomplished, and, as we stood below, we could look up the trunk, which was like a great smooth funnel, and see the sky above. It was now ready for the staircase, and first we erected in the center a stout sapling to form an axis round which to build the spiral stairs; in this we cut notches to receive the steps, and corresponding notches in the tree itself to support the outer ends. The steps themselves we formed carefully and neatly of planks from the wreck, and clenched them firmly in their places with stout nails. Upward and upward we built, cutting windows in the trunk as we required, to admit light and air, until we were flush with the top of the center pole. On this pole we erected another to reach the top of the tree, and



Our fowls were Franz's particular charges, and they came at his call.

securing it firmly, built in the same way round it until we at length reached the level of the floor of the nest above. To make the ascent of the stairs perfectly easy we ran a hand-rail on either side, one round the center pillar, and the other following the curve of the trunk.

This task occupied us a whole month. We were, however, of course not neglecting the details of our colonial establishment. There were all the animals to be attended to; the goats and sheep had both presented us with additions to our flock, and these frisky youngsters had to be seen after. Our fowls were Franz's particular charges, and they came at his call. The other pets were also flourishing, and were being usefully trained. The buffalo, after giving us much trouble, had now become perfectly domesticated, and was a very useful beast of burden, besides being a capital steed for the boys.

The education of the eagle was not neglected. Fritz every day shot small birds for his food, and these he placed between the wide-spreading horns of the buffalo or goat, that he might become accustomed to pounce upon living prey. These lessons had their due effect, and the bird, having been taught to obey the voice and whistle of his master, he was soon allowed to bring down small birds upon the wing, when he stooped and struck his quarry in most sportsmanlike manner.

Neither was Master Knips allowed to remain idle. Ernest with Jack's help made a little basket of rushes, which he so arranged with straps that

it might be easily fitted on to the monkey's back. Thus equipped, he was taught to mount cocoanut palms and other lofty trees, and to bring down their fruit in the hamper.

These, and such like employments, afforded us the rest and recreation we required while engaged in the laborious task of staircase building.

I then turned shoemaker, for I had promised myself a pair of waterproof boots, and now determined to make them.

Taking a pair of socks, I filled them with sand and then coated them over with a thin layer of clay to form a convenient mold; this was soon hardened in the sun, and was ready for use. Layer after layer of caoutchouc I brushed over it, allowing each layer to dry before the next was put on, until at length I considered that the shoes were of sufficient thickness. I dried them, broke out the clay, secured with nails a strip of buffalo hide to the soles, brushed that over with caoutchouc, and I had a pair of comfortable, durable, respectable-looking waterproof boots.

I was delighted; orders poured in from all sides, and soon everyone in the family was likewise provided for.

One morning, as we were completing our spiral staircase, and giving it such finish as we were capable of, we were suddenly alarmed by hearing a most terrific noise, the roaring or bellowing of a wild beast.

Arming the dogs with their collars, I sent them

out to protect the animals below, closed the door, and joined my family. Every gun was loaded, every eye was upon the watch. The sound drew nearer, and then all was still; nothing was to be seen. I determined to descend and reconnoiter, and Fritz and I carefully crept down; with our guns at full cock we glided among the trees; noiselessly and quickly we pushed on further and further; suddenly, close by, we heard the terrific sound again. Fritz raised his gun, but almost as quickly again dropped it, and burst into a hearty fit of laughter. There was no mistaking those dulcet tones—he-haw, he-haw, he-haw—resounded through the forest, and our ass, braying his approach right merrily, appeared in sight. To our surprise, however, our friend was not alone: behind him trotted another animal, an ass no doubt, but slim and graceful as a horse.

“Fritz,” I whispered, “that is an onager. Creep back to Falconhurst and bring me a piece of cord—quietly now!”

While he was gone, I cut a bamboo and split it half-way down to form a pair of pincers, which I knew would be of use to me should I get near the animal. Fritz soon returned with the cord, and also brought some oats and salt. We made one end of the cord fast to a tree, and at the other end made a running noose. Silently we watched the animals as they approached, quietly browsing; Fritz then arose, holding in one hand the noose and in the other some oats and salt. The ass, see-

ing his favorite food thus held out, advanced to take it; Fritz allowed him to do so, and he was soon munching contentedly. The stranger, on seeing Fritz, started back; but finding her companion showed no signs of alarm, was reassured, and soon approached sniffing, and was about to take some of the tempting food. In a moment the noose left Fritz's adroit hand and fell round her neck; with a single bound she sprang backward the full length of the cord, the noose drew tight, and she fell to the earth half strangled. I at once ran up, loosened the rope, and replaced it by a halter; and placing the pincers upon her nose, secured her by two cords fastened between two trees, and then left her to recover herself.

Next morning I found the onager after her night's rest as wild as ever, and as I looked at the handsome creature I almost despaired of ever taming her proud spirit. Every expedient was tried, and at length, when the animal was subdued by hunger, I thought I might venture to mount her; and having given her the strongest curb and shackled her feet I attempted to do so. She was as unruly as ever, and as a last expedient I resolved to adopt a plan which, though cruel, was I knew attended with wonderful success by the American Indians, by whom it is practiced. Watching a favorable opportunity, I sprang upon the onager's back, and seizing her long ear in my teeth, in spite of her kicking and plunging, bit it through. The result was marvelous, the animal ceased plunging, and,

quivering violently, stood stock still. From that moment we were her masters, the children mounted her one after another, and she carried them obediently and quietly.

Additions to our poultry yard reminded me of the necessity of providing some substantial shelter for our animals before the rainy season came on; three broods of chickens had been successfully hatched, and the little creatures, forty in all, were my wife's pride and delight. We began by making a roof over the vaulted roots of our tree, forming the framework of bamboo canes, which we laid close together and bound tightly down; others we fixed below as supports. The interstices were filled up with clay and moss; and coating the whole over with a mixture of tar and lime-water, we obtained a firm balcony, and a capital room impervious to the severest fall of rain. I ran a light rail round the balcony to give it a more ornamental appearance, and below divided the building into several compartments. Stables, poultry yard, hay and provision lofts, dairy, kitchen, larder, and dining-hall were united under one roof.

Our winter quarters were now completed, and we had but to store them with food. Day after day we worked, bringing in provisions of every description.

As we were one evening returning from gathering potatoes, it struck me that we should take in a store of acorns; and sending the two younger boys home with their mother and the cart, I took

a large canvas bag, and with Fritz and Ernest, the former mounted on his onager, and the latter carrying his little favorite, Knips, made a detour toward the Acorn Wood.

We reached the spot, tied Lightfoot to a neighboring tree, and began rapidly to fill the sack. As we were thus engaged, Knips sprang suddenly into a bush close by, from which, a moment afterward, issued such strange cries that Ernest followed to see what could be the matter.

"Come!" he shouted; "come and help me! I've got a couple of birds and their eggs. Quick! Ruffed grouse!"

We hurried to the spot. There was Ernest with a fluttering, screaming bird in either hand; while, with his foot, he was endeavoring to prevent his greedy little monkey from seizing the eggs. We quickly tied the legs of the birds, and removing the eggs from the nest, placed them in Ernest's hat; while he gathered some of the long, broad grass, with which the nest was woven, and which grew luxuriantly around, for Franz to play at sword-drill with. We then loaded the onager with the acorns, and moved homeward. The eggs I covered carefully with dry moss, that they might be kept warm, and as soon as possible I handed them over to my wife, who managed the mother so cleverly that she induced her to return to the eggs, and in a few days, to our great delight, we had fifteen beautiful little Canadian chicks.

Franz was greatly pleased with the "swords" his

brother brought him; but having no small companion on whom to exercise his valor, he amused himself for a short time in hewing down imaginary foes, and then cut the reeds in slips, and plaited them to form a whip for Lightfoot. The leaves seemed so pliable and strong that I examined them to see to what further use they might be put. Their tissue was composed of long silky fibers. A sudden thought struck me—this must be New Zealand flax. I could not rest till I had announced this invaluable discovery to my wife.

“Bring me the leaves!” she exclaimed. “Oh, what a delightful discovery! No one shall now be clothed in rags; just make me a spindle, and you shall soon have shirts and stockings and trousers, all good homespun!”

We could not help smiling at her eager zeal; but Fritz and Ernest sprang on their steeds, and soon the onager and buffalo were galloping home again, each laden with a great bundle of flax. For a fortnight we put the flax to steep in Flamingo Marsh, and then taking it out and drying it thoroughly in the sun, stored it for future use at Falconhurst.

Daily did we load our cart with provisions to be brought to our winter quarters: manioc, potatoes, cocoanuts, sweet acorns, sugar-canes, were all collected and stored in abundance—for grumbling thunder, lowering skies, and sharp showers warned us that we had no time to lose. Our corn was sowed, our animals housed, our provisions stored, when down came the rain.

To continue in our nest we found impossible, and we were obliged to retreat to the trunk, where we carried such of our domestic furniture as might have been injured by the damp. Our dwelling was indeed crowded: the animals and provisions below, and our beds and household goods around us, hemmed us in on every side; by dint of patience and better packing, we obtained sufficient room to work and lie down in; by degrees, too, we became accustomed to the continual noise of the animals and the smell of the stables. The smoke from the fire, which we were occasionally obliged to light, was not agreeable; but in time even that seemed to become more bearable.

To make more space, we turned such animals as we had captured, and who therefore might be imagined to know how to shift for themselves, outside during the daytime, bringing them under the arched roots only at night. To perform this duty Fritz and I used to sally forth every evening, and as regularly every evening did we return soaked to the skin. To obviate this, the mother, who feared these continual wettings might injure our health, contrived waterproofs: she brushed on several layers of caoutchouc over stout shirts, to which she attached hoods; she then fixed to these duck trousers, and thus prepared for each of us a complete waterproof suit, clad in which we might brave the severest rain.

In spite of our endeavors to keep ourselves busy, the time dragged heavily. Our mornings were oc-

cupied in tending the animals; the boys amused themselves with their pets, and assisted me in the manufacture of carding-combs and a spindle for the mother. In the evening, when our room was illuminated with wax candles, I wrote a journal of all the events which had occurred since our arrival in this foreign land; and, while the mother was busy with her needle and Ernest making sketches of birds, beasts, and flowers with which he had met during the past months, Fritz and Jack taught little Franz to read.

Week after week rolled by. Week after week saw us still close prisoners. Incessant rain battered down above us; constant gloom hung over the desolate scene.

CHAPTER IX

ROCK HOUSE

The winds at length were lulled, the sun shot his brilliant rays through the riven clouds, the rain ceased to fall—spring had come. No prisoners set at liberty could have felt more joy than we did as we stepped forth from our winter abode, and drank in the pure, balmy air of spring.

Our plantations were thriving vigorously. The seed we had sown was shooting through the moist earth. All nature was refreshed.

Our nest was our first care. We worked hard, and in a few days it was again habitable. My wife begged that I would now start her with the flax and she and Franz were soon hard at work, the little boy reeling off the thread his mother spun.

Fritz and I made an excursion to Tentholm. The damage done to Falconhurst was as nothing compared to the scene that awaited us. The tent was blown to the ground, the canvas torn to rags, the provisions soaked, and two casks of powder utterly destroyed. We immediately spread such things as we hoped yet to preserve in the sun to dry. The pinnacle was safe, but our faithful tub-boat was dashed in pieces, and the irreparable damage we had sustained made me resolve to contrive some

safer and more stable winter-quarters before the arrival of the next rainy season. Fritz proposed that we should hollow out a cave in the rock, and though the difficulties such an undertaking would present appeared almost insurmountable, I yet determined to make the attempt.

Some days afterward we left Falconhurst with the cart laden with a cargo of spades, hammers, chisels, pickaxes, and crowbars, and began our undertaking. On the smooth face of the perpendicular rock I drew out in chalk the size of the proposed entrance and then, with minds bent on success, we battered away.

On the tenth day, as our persevering blows were falling heavily, Jack, who was working diligently with a hammer and crowbar, shouted:

"Gone, father! Fritz, my bar has gone through the mountain!"

"Run round and get it," laughed Fritz; "perhaps it has dropped into Europe—you must not lose a good crowbar."

"But, really, it is through; it went right through the rock; I heard it crash down inside. Oh, do come and see!" he shouted excitedly.

We sprang to his side, and I thrust the handle of my hammer into the hole he spoke of; it met with no opposition, I could turn it in any direction I chose. Fritz handed me a long pole; I tried the depth with that. Nothing could I feel. A thin wall, then, was all that intervened between us and a great cavern.

With a shout of joy, the boys battered vigorously at the rock; piece by piece fell, and soon the hole was large enough for us to enter. I stepped near the aperture, and was about to make a further examination, when a sudden rush of poisonous air turned me giddy, and shouting to my sons to stand off, I leaned against the rock.

I sent the boys for a chest of signal rockets we had brought from the wreck. We let fly some dozens of these fiery serpents, which went whizzing in, and disappeared at apparently a vast distance from us.

We waited for a little while after these experiments, and I then threw in lighted hay. It burned clearly; the air was purified.

Fritz and I enlarged the opening, while Jack, springing on his buffalo, thundered away to Falconhurst to bear the great and astonishing news to his mother.

Great must have been the effect of Jack's eloquence on those at home, for the timbers of the bridge were soon again resounding under the swift but heavy tramp of his steed; and he was quickly followed by the rest of our party in the cart.

All were in the highest state of excitement. Jack had stowed in the cart all the candles he could find, and we now, lighting these, shouldered our arms and entered. I led the way, sounding the ground as I advanced with a long pole, that we might not fall unexpectedly into any great hole or chasm. Silently we marched—the mother, the boys, and

even the dogs seeming overawed with the grandeur and beauty of the scene. We were in a grotto of diamonds—a vast cave of glittering crystal: the candles reflected on the walls a golden light, bright as the stars of heaven, while great crystal pillars rose from the floor like mighty trees, mingling their branches high above us and drooping in hundreds of stalactites, which sparkled and glittered with all the colors of the rainbow.

The floor of this magnificent palace was formed of hard, dry sand, so dry that I saw at once that we might safely take up our abode therein, without the slightest fear of danger from damp.

Nothing was now talked of but the new house, how it should be arranged, how it should be fitted up. The safety and comfort of Falconhurst, which had at first seemed so great, now dwindled away in our opinion to nothing; it should be kept up, we decided, merely as a summer residence, while our cave should be formed into a winter house and impregnable castle. Our attention was now fully occupied with this new house. Light and air were to be admitted, so we hewed a row of windows in the rock, where we fitted the window cases we had brought from the officers' cabins. We brought the door, too, from Falconhurst, and fitted it in the aperture we had made. The opening in the trunk of the tree I determined to conceal with bark, as less likely to attract the notice of wild beasts or savages should they approach during our absence.

The cave itself we divided into four parts: in front, a large compartment into which the door opened, subdivided into our sitting, eating, and sleeping apartments; the right-hand division containing our kitchen and workshop, and the left our stables; behind all this, in the dark recesses of the cave, was our storehouse and powder-magazine.

As we were one morning approaching Tentholm, we were attracted by a most curious phenomenon. The waters out at sea appeared agitated by some unseen movement, and as they heaved and boiled, their surface, struck by the beams of the morning sun, seemed illuminated by flashes of fire. Over the water where this disturbance was taking place hovered hundreds of birds, screaming loudly, which ever and anon would dart downward, some plunging beneath the water, some skimming the surface. Then again they would rise and resume their harsh cries. The shining, sparkling mass then rolled onward, and approached in a direct line our bay, followed by the feathered flock above. We hurried down to the shore to further examine this strange sight.

I was convinced as we approached that it was a shoal or bank of herrings.

Soon our fishery was in operation. Jack and Fritz stood in the water with baskets, and baled out the fish, as one bales water with a bucket, throwing them to us on the shore. As quickly as possible we cleaned them, and placed them in casks with salt,

first a layer of salt, and then a layer of herrings, and so on, until we had ready many casks of pickled fish stored away at the back of our cave.

Our good fortune, however, was not to end here. A day after the herring fishery was over, and the shoal had left our bay, a great number of seals appeared, attracted by the refuse of the herrings which we had thrown into the sea. Though I feared they would not be suitable for our table, we yet secured a score or two for the sake of their skins and fat. The skins we drew carefully off for harness and clothing, and the fat we boiled down for oil, which we put aside in casks for tanning, soap-making, and burning in lamps.

These occupations interfered for some time with our work at Rock House; but as soon as possible we again returned to our labor with renewed vigor.

About a month after the appearance of the herrings, we were favored by a visit from other shoals of fish. Jack espied them first, and called to us that a lot of young whales were off the coast. We ran down and discovered the bay apparently swarming with great sturgeon, salmon, and trout, all making for the mouth of Jackal River, that they might ascend it and deposit their spawn among the stones.

Jack was delighted at his discovery.

"Here are proper fish!" he exclaimed; and while I was still puzzling my brains as to how I should set to work, he returned with his fishing apparatus in hand; a bow and arrow, and a ball of twine.

At the arrow-head he had fastened a barbed

spike, and had secured the arrow to the end of the string. Armed with this weapon, he advanced to the river's edge.

His arrow flew from the bow, and, to my surprise, struck one of the largest fish in the side.



We were soon all in the water, Fritz with a harpoon, Ernest with a rod and line and I with a pitchfork.

"Help, father, help!" he cried, as the great fish darted off, carrying arrow and all with it; "help! or he will pull me into the water."

I ran to his assistance, and together we struggled with the finny monster. He pulled tremen-

dously, and lashed the water around him; but we held the cord fast, and he had no chance of escape. Weaker and weaker grew his struggles, and, at length, exhausted by his exertions and loss of blood, he allowed us to draw him ashore.

He was a noble prize, and Fritz and Ernest, who came up just as we completed his capture, were quite envious of Jack's success.

We were soon all in the water, Fritz with a harpoon, Ernest with a rod and line, and I myself, armed, like Neptune, with an iron trident, or more properly speaking, perhaps, a pitchfork. Soon the shore was strewn with a goodly number of the finest fish—monster after monster we drew to land.

I knew that of the sturgeon's bladder the best isin-glass is made, so carefully collecting the air-bladders from all those we had killed, I washed them and hung them up to stiffen. The outer coat or membrane I then peeled off, cutting the remainder into strips, technically called staples. These staples I placed in an iron pot over the fire, and when they had been reduced to a proper consistency I strained off the glue through a clean cloth, and spread it out on a slab of stone in thin layers, letting them remain until they were dry. The substance I thus obtained was beautifully transparent, and promised to serve as an excellent substitute for glass in our window-frames.

As we passed by the field from which the potatoes had been dug, we found it covered with barley, wheat, rye, and peas in profusion.

I turned to the mother in amazement.

"Where has this fine crop sprung from?" said I.

"From the earth," she replied laughing, "where Franz and I sowed the seed I brought from the wreck. The ground was already tilled by you and the boys; all we had to do was to scatter the seed."

I was delighted at the sight, and it augered well, I thought, for the success of my maize plantation. We hurried to the field. The crop had indeed grown well, and, what was more, appeared to be duly appreciated. A tremendous flock of feathered thieves rose as we approached. Among them Fritz espied a few ruffed grouse, and, quick as thought unhooding his eagle, he started him off in chase, then sprung on his onager and followed at full gallop. His noble bird marked out the finest grouse, and, soaring high above it, stooped and bore his prey to the ground. Fritz was close at hand, and springing through the bushes he saved the bird from death, hooded the eagle's eyes, and returned triumphantly.

We then made preparations for an excursion the following day, for I wished to establish a sort of semi-civilized farm at some distance from Falconhurst, where we might place some of our animals, which had become too numerous with our limited means to supply them with food. In the large cart, to which we harnessed the buffalo, cow, and ass, we placed a dozen fowls, four young pigs, two couple of sheep, and as many goats, and a pair of hens and one cock grouse. Fritz led the way on his onager, and

by a new track we forced a passage through the woods and tall grasses toward Cape Disappointment.

The difficult march was at length over, and we emerged from the forest upon a large plain covered with curious little bushes; the branches of these little shrubs and the ground above them were covered with pure white flakes.

"Snow! snow!" exclaimed Franz. "Oh, mother, come down from the cart and play snowballs. This is jolly; much better than the ugly rain."

I was not surprised at the boy's mistake, for indeed the flakes did look like snow; but before I could express my opinion, Fritz declared that the plant must be a kind of dwarf cotton tree. We approached nearer and found he was right—soft fine wool inclosed in pods, and still hanging on the bushes or lying on the ground, abounded in every direction. We had indeed discovered this valuable plant. The mother was charmed; and gathering a great quantity in three capacious bags, we resumed our journey.

Crossing the cotton field we ascended a pretty wooded hill. The view from the summit was glorious: luxuriant grass at our feet stretching down the hillside, dotted here and there with shady trees, among which gushed down a sparkling brook, while below lay the rich green forest, with the sea beyond.

What better situation could we hope to find for

our new farm? Pasture, water, shade, and shelter, all were here.

We pitched our tent, built our fireplace, and leaving the mother to prepare our repast, Fritz and I selected a spot for the erection of our shed. We soon found a group of trees so situated that the trunks would serve as posts for our intended building. Thither we carried all our tools, and then, as the day was far advanced, enjoyed our supper, and lay down upon most comfortable beds, which the mother had prepared for us with the cotton.

The group of trees we had selected was exactly suited to our purpose, for it formed a regular rectilinear figure, the greatest side of which faced the sea. I cut deep mortices in the trunks about ten feet from the ground, and again ten feet higher up to form a second story. In these mortices I inserted beams, thus forming a framework for my building, and then, making a roof of laths, I overlaid it with bark, which I stripped from a neighboring tree, and fixed with acacia thorns, which would effectually shoot off any amount of rain.

The completion of our new farmhouse occupied us several days; we wove strong lianas and other creepers together to form the walls to the height of about six feet; the rest, up to the roof, we formed merely of a lattice-work of laths to admit both air and light. Within we divided the house into three parts; one subdivided into stalls for the animals;

a second fitted with perches for the birds, and a third, simply furnished with a rough table and benches, to serve as a sleeping apartment for ourselves, when we should find it necessary to pay the place a visit.

We quitted the farm (which we named Woodlands), after providing amply for the wants of the animals, sheep, goats, and poultry which we left there, and had not traveled far until a hill, which seemed to promise a good view from its summit, attracted my notice. On climbing it, we were more than repaid for the exertion by the extensive and beautiful prospect which lay spread before our eyes. The situation altogether was so agreeable, that here also I resolved to make a settlement, to be visited occasionally, and, after resting awhile and talking the matter over, we set to work to build a cottage such as we had lately finished at Woodlands. Our experience there enabled us to proceed quickly with the work, and in a few days the rustic abode was completed, and received, by Ernest's choice, the grand name of Prospect Hill.

I may as well relate in this place what I omitted at the time of its occurrence. During the rainy season our cow presented us with a bull-calf, and that there might never be any difficulty in managing him, I at a very early age pierced his nose and placed a short stick in it, to be exchanged for a ring when he was old enough. The question now came to be, who should be his master, and to what should we train him?

"What say you, my boy—will you undertake to look after this little fellow?" said I to Franz.

"Oh, yes, father!" he replied. "Once you told me about a strong man, I think his name was Milo, and he had a tiny calf, and he used to carry it about everywhere. It grew bigger and bigger, but still he carried it often, till at last he grew so strong that when it was quite a great big ox, he could lift it as easily as ever. And so, you see, if I take care of our wee calf and teach it to do what I like, perhaps when it grows big I shall still be able to manage it, and then—oh, papa—do you think I might ride upon it?"

I smiled at the child's simplicity, and his funny application of the story of Milo of Cortona.

"The calf shall be yours, my boy. Make him as tame as you can, and we will see about letting you mount him some day; but remember, he will be a great bull long before you are nearly a man. Now, what will you call him?"

"Shall I call him Grumble, father? Hear what a low muttering noise he makes!"

"Grumble will do famously."

"Grumble, Grumble. Oh, it beats your buffalo's name hollow, Jack!"

"Not a bit," said he; "why, you can't compare the two names. Fancy mother saying, 'Here comes Franz on Grumble, but Jack *riding on the Storm*.' Oh, it sounds sublime!"

For two months we worked steadily at our salt-cave, in order to complete the necessary arrange-

ment of partition walls, so as to put the rooms and stalls for the animals in comfortable order for the next long rainy season, during which time, when other work would be at a standstill, we could carry on many minor details for the improvement of the abode.

One morning, just after these labors at the salt-cave were completed, happening to awake unusually early, I turned my thoughts, as I lay waiting for sunrise, to considering what length of time we had now passed on this coast, and discovered, to my surprise, that the very next day would be the anniversary of our escape from the wreck.

My mind was full of indefinite plans when I rose, and the day's work began as usual. I took care that everything should be cleaned, cleared, and set in order both outside and inside our dwelling; none, however, suspecting that there was any particular object in view. Other more private preparations I also made for the next day. At supper I made the coming event known to the assembled family.

"Good people, do you know that to-morrow is a very great and important day? We shall have to keep it in honor of our merciful escape to this land, and call it Thanksgiving-Day."

Everyone was surprised to hear that we had already been twelve months in the country—indeed, my wife believed I might be mistaken, until I showed her how I had calculated regularly ever since the 31st of January, on which day we were wrecked, by marking off in my almanac the Sun-

days as they arrived for the remaining eleven months of that year.

Before they went to sleep, I could hear my boys whispering among themselves, about "father's mysterious allusions" to next day's festival and rejoicings; but I offered no explanations, and went to sleep, little guessing that the rogues had laid a counter-plot far more surprising than my simple plan for their diversion.

Nothing less than roar of artillery startled me from sleep at daybreak next morning. I sprang up and found my wife as much alarmed as I was by the noise, otherwise I should have been inclined to believe it fancy.

"Fritz! dress quickly and come with me!" cried I, turning to his hammock. Lo, it was empty! Neither he nor Jack were to be seen.

Altogether bewildered, I was hastily dressing, when their voices were heard, and they rushed in shouting: "Hurrah! didn't we rouse you with a right good thundering salute?"

Afterward we sat together for a long time, enjoying the calm beauty of the morning, and talking of all that had taken place on the memorable days of the storm a year ago; for I desired that the awful events of that time should live in the remembrance of my children with a deepening sense of gratitude for our deliverance. Therefore I read aloud passages from my journal, as well as many beautiful verses from the Psalms, expressive of joyful praise and thanksgiving, so that even the

youngest among us was impressed and solemnized at the recollections of escape from a terrible death, and also led to bless and praise the name of the Lord our Deliverer.

Dinner followed shortly after this happy service, and I then announced for the afternoon a "Grand Display of Athletic Sports," of which I and my wife were to be spectators and judges.

"Father, what a grand idea!"

"Oh, how jolly! Are we to run races?"

"And prizes! Will there be prizes, father?"

"The judges offer prizes for competition in every sort of manly exercise," replied I. "Shooting, running, riding, leaping, climbing, swimming; we will have an exhibition of your skill in all. Now for it!"

"Let us have shooting first, and the rest when the heat of the day declines. Here is a mark I have got ready for you," said I, producing a board roughly shaped like a kangaroo, and of about the size of one. It was fixed in the attitude most characteristic of the creature, and the distance for firing measured off. Each of the three competitors was to fire twice.

Fritz hit the kangaroo's head each time; Ernest hit the body once; and Jack, by a lucky chance, shot the ears clean away from the head, which feat raised a shout of laughter.

A second trial with pistols ensued, in which Fritz again came off victor.

Then desiring the competitors to load with small

shot, I threw a little board as high as I possibly could up in the air, each in turn aiming at and endeavoring to hit it before it touched the ground.

In this I found to my surprise that the sedate Ernest succeeded quite as well as his more impetuous brother Fritz.

After this followed archery, which I liked to encourage, foreseeing that a time might come when ammunition would fail; and in this practice I saw with pleasure that my elder sons were really skillful, while even little Franz acquitted himself well.

A pause ensued, and then I started a running match.

Fritz, Ernest, and Jack were to run to Falconhurst by the most direct path. The first to reach the tree was to bring me, in proof of his success, a penknife I had accidentally left on the table in my sleeping room.

At a given signal, away went the racers in fine style. Fritz and Jack, putting forth all their powers, took the lead at once, running in advance of Ernest, who started at a good, steady pace, which I predicted he would be better able to maintain than such a furious rate as his brothers.

But long before we expected to see them back, a tremendous noise of galloping caused us to look with surprise toward the bridge, and Jack made his appearance, thundering along on his buffalo, with the onager and the donkey tearing after him riderless, and the whole party in the wildest spirits.

"Hullo!" cried I, "what sort of foot race do you call this, Master Jack?"

He shouted merrily as he dashed up to us; then flinging himself off and saluting us in a playful way:

"I very soon saw," said he, "that I hadn't a chance; so renouncing all idea of the prize, I caught Storm, and made him gallop home with me, to be in time to see the others come puffing in. Lightfoot and old Grizzle chose to join me—I never invited them!"

By and by the other boys arrived, Ernest holding up the knife in token of being the winner; and after hearing all particulars about the running, and that he had reached Falconhurst two minutes before Fritz, we proceeded to test the climbing powers of the youthful athletes.

In this exercise Jack performed wonders. He ascended with remarkable agility the highest palms whose stems he could clasp. And when he put on the shark-skin buskins, which enabled him to take firm hold of larger trees, he played antics like a squirrel or a monkey, peeping and grinning at us, at first on one side of the stem, and then on the other, in a most diverting way.

Fritz and Ernest climbed well, but could not come near the grace and skill of their active and lively young brother.

Riding followed, and marvelous feats were performed, Fritz and Jack proving themselves very equal in their management of their different steeds.

I thought the riding was over, when little Franz appeared from the stable in the cave, leading young Grumble, the bull-calf, with a neat saddle of kangaroo hide, and a bridle passed through his nose ring.

The child saluted us with a pretty little air of confidence, exclaiming:

"Now, most learned judges, prepare to see something quite new and wonderful! The great bull-tamer, Milo of Cortona, desires the honor of exhibiting before you."

Then taking a whip, and holding the end of a long cord, he made the animal, at the word of command, walk, trot, and gallop in a circle round him.

He afterward mounted, and showed off Grumble's somewhat awkward paces.

The sports were concluded by swimming matches, and the competitors found a plunge in salt water very refreshing after their varied exertions.

Fritz showed himself a master in the art. At home in the element, no moment betokened either exertion or weariness. Ernest exhibited too much anxiety and effort, while Jack was far too violent and hasty, and soon became exhausted. Franz gave token of future skill.

By this time, as it was getting late, we returned to our dwelling, the mother having preceded us in order to make arrangements for the ceremony of prize-giving.

We found her seated in great state, with the prizes set out by her side.

The boys marched in, pretending to play various instruments in imitation of a band, and then all four, bowing respectfully, stood before her, like the victors in a tournament of old, awaiting the reward of valor from the Queen of Beauty, which she bestowed with a few words of praise and encouragement.

Fritz, to his immense delight, received, as the prize for shooting and swimming, a splendid double-barreled rifle, and a beautiful hunting-knife.

To Ernest, as winner of the running match, was given a handsome gold watch.

For climbing and riding, Jack had a pair of silver-plated spurs, and a riding whip, both of which gave him extraordinary pleasure.

Franz received a pair of stirrups, and a driving whip made of rhinoceros hide, which we thought would be of use to him in the character of bull-trainer.

When the ceremony was supposed to be over, I advanced, and solemnly presented to my wife a lovely work-box, filled with every imaginable requirement for a lady's work-table, which she accepted with equal surprise and delight.

The whole entertainment afforded the boys such intense pleasure, and their spirits rose to such a pitch, that nothing would serve them but another salvo of artillery, in order to close with befitting dignity and honor so great a day. They gave me no peace till they had leave to squander some gun-powder, and then at last their excited feelings

seeming relieved, we were able to sit down to supper; shortly afterward we joined in family worship and retired to rest.

Soon after the great festival of our grand Thanksgiving-Day I recollected that it was now the time when, the figs at Falconhurst being ripe, immense flocks of ortolans and wild pigeons were attracted thither, and as we had found those preserved last year of the greatest use among our stores of winter provisions, I would not miss the opportunity of renewing our stock; and therefore, laying aside the building work, removed with all speed to our home in the tree, where sure enough we found the first detachment of the birds already busy with the fruit.

In order to spare ammunition, I resolved to concoct a strong sort of birdlime, of which I had read in some account of the Palm Islanders, who make it of fresh caoutchouc mixed with oil, and of so good a quality that it has been known to catch even peacocks and turkeys.

CHAPTER X

A STRANDED WHALE

On the following morning we were early astir; and as soon as breakfast was over, we went regularly to work with the bird-lime. The tough, adhesive mixture of caoutchouc, oil, and turpentine turned out well.

The boys brought rods, which I smeared over, and made them place among the upper branches, where the fruit was plentiful, and the birds most congregated. The pigeons alighting, stuck fast. The more they fluttered and struggled, the more completely were they bedaubed with the tenacious mixture, and at length, with piteous cries, fell to the ground, bearing the sticks with them. The birds were then removed, fresh lime spread, and the snare set again.

The boys quickly became able to carry on the work without my assistance; so, leaving it to them, I went to prepare torches, with pine wood and turpentine, for the night attack.

When evening drew on, we set out for the wood of sweet acorns, provided merely with long bamboo canes, torches, and canvas sacks.

These weapons appeared very curious and insuf-

ficient to the children; but their use was speedily apparent; for darkness having come upon us almost before we reached the wood, I lighted the torches, and perceived, as I expected, that every branch was thickly laden with ortolans and wild pigeons, who were roosting there in amazing numbers.

Suddenly aroused by the glare of light, confusion prevailed among the terrified birds, who fluttered helplessly through the branches, dazzled and bewildered, and many falling, even before we began to use the sticks, were picked up, and put in the bags. When we beat and struck the branches, it was as much as my wife and Franz could do to gather up the quantities of pigeons that soon lay on the ground. The sacks were speedily quite full. We turned homeward, and on reaching Falconhurst, put our booty in safety, and gladly withdrew to rest.

The following day was wholly occupied in plucking, boiling, roasting, and stewing, so that we could find time for nothing else.

About this time, a beautiful little foal, a son of the onager, was added to our stud, and as he promised to grow up strong and tractable, we soon saw how useful he would be. The name of Swift was given to him, and he was to be trained for my own riding.

The interior arrangements of the cavern being now well forward, I applied myself to contriving an aqueduct, that fresh water might be led close up to our cave, for it was a long way to go to fetch it

from Jackal River, and especially inconvenient on washing days. As I wanted to do this before the rainy season again, I set about it at once.

Pipes of hollow bamboo answered the purpose well and a large cask formed the reservoir. The supply was good, and the comfort of having it close at hand so great that the mother declared she was as well pleased with our engineering as if we had made her a fountain and marble basin adorned with mermaids and dolphins.

Anticipating the setting in of the rains, I pressed forward all work connected with stores for the winter, and great was the in-gathering of roots, fruits, and grains, potatoes, rice, guavas, sweet acorns, pine cones; load after load arrived at the cavern, and the mother's active needle was in constant requisition, as the demand for more sacks and bags was incessant.

Casks and barrels of all sorts and sizes were pressed into the service, until at last the raft was knocked to pieces, and its tubs made to do duty in the storerooms.

Heavy clouds gathered in the horizon, and passing storms of wind, with thunder, lightning, and torrents of rain swept over the face of nature from time to time.

The sea was in frequent commotion; heavy ground swells drove masses of water hissing and foaming against the cliffs. Everything heralded the approaching rains. All nature joined in sound-

ing forth the solemn overture to the grandest work of the year.

It was now near the beginning of the month of June, and we had twelve weeks of bad weather before us.

We established some of the animals with ourselves at the salt cave. The cow, the ass, Lightfoot, Storm, and the dogs, were all necessary to us, while Knips, Fangs, and the eagle were sure to be a great amusement in the long evenings.

The boys would ride over to Falconhurst very often to see that all was in order there, and fetch anything required.

Much remained to be done in order to give the cave a comfortable appearance, which became more desirable now that we had to live indoors. Several days were spent in arranging the different rooms. Ernest and Franz undertook the library, fixing shelves, and setting the books in order.

Jack and his mother took in hand the sitting room and kitchen, while Fritz and I, as better able for heavy work, arranged the workshops. The carpenter's bench, the turning lathe, and a large chest of tools were set in convenient places, and many tools and instruments hung on the walls.

An adjoining chamber was fitted up as a forge, with fireplace, bellows, and anvil complete, all which we had found in the ship, packed together, and ready to set up.

Our rocky home was greatly improved by a wide

porch which I made along the whole front of our rooms and entrances, by leveling the ground to form a terrace, and sheltering it with a veranda of bamboo, supported by pillars of the same.

Ernest and Franz were highly successful as librarians.

The books, when unpacked and arranged, proved to be a most valuable collection, capable of affording every sort of educational advantage.

I foresaw much interesting study on discovering that we possessed the grammars and dictionaries of a great many languages, a subject for which we all had a taste. With French we were well acquainted. Fritz and Ernest had begun to learn English at school, and made further progress during a visit to England. The mother, who had once been intimate with a Dutch family, could speak that language pretty well.

After a great deal of discussion, we agreed to study different languages, so that in the event of meeting with people of other nations, there should be at least one of the family able to communicate with them.

Our family circle by and by represented Babel in miniature, for scraps and fragments of all these tongues kept buzzing about our ears from morning to night, each sporting his newly acquired word or sentence on every possible occasion, propounding idioms and peculiar expressions like riddles, to puzzle the rest.

In this way, the labor of learning was very con-

siderably lightened, and everyone came to know a few words of each language.

Occasionally we amused ourselves by opening chests and packages hitherto untouched, and brought unexpected treasures to light—mirrors, wardrobes, a pair of console tables with polished marble tops, elegant writing tables and handsome chairs, clocks of various descriptions, a musical box, and a chronometer were found; and by degrees our abode was fitted up like a palace, so that sometimes we wondered at ourselves, and felt as though we were strutting about in borrowed plumes.

As the rainy season drew to a close, the weather for a while became wilder, and the storms fiercer than ever. Thunder roared, lightning blazed, torrents rushed toward the sea, which came in raging billows to meet them, lashed to fury by the tempests of wind which swept the surface of the deep.

The uproar of the elements came to an end at last. Nature resumed her attitude of repose, her smiling aspect of peaceful beauty; and soon all traces of the ravages of floods and storms would disappear beneath the luxuriant vegetation of the tropics.

Gladly quitting the sheltering walls of Rockburg to roam once more in the open air, we crossed Jackal River for a walk along the coast, and presently Fritz with his sharp eyes observed something on the small island near Flamingo Marsh, which,

was, he said, long and rounded, resembling a boat bottom upward.

Examining it with the telescope, I could form no other conjecture, and we resolved to make it the object of an excursion next day, being delighted to resume our old habit of starting in pursuit of adventure.

The boat was accordingly got in readiness; it required some repairs, and fresh pitching, and then we made for the point of interest, indulging in a variety of surmises as to what we should find.

It proved to be a huge, stranded whale.

The island being steep and rocky, it was necessary to be careful; but we found a landing-place on the further side. The boys hurried by the nearest way to the beach where lay the monster of the deep, while I clambered to the highest point of the islet, which commanded a view of the mainland from Rockburg to Falconhurst.

On rejoining my sons, I found them only half-way to the great fish, and as I drew near they shouted in high glee:

"Oh! father, just look at the glorious shells and coral branches we are finding. How does it happen that there are such quantities?"

"Only consider how the recent storms have stirred the ocean to its depths! No doubt thousands of shell-fish have been detached from their rocks and dashed in all directions by the waves, which have thrown ashore even so huge a creature as the whale yonder."

"Yes; isn't he a frightful great brute!" cried Fritz. "Ever so much larger than he seemed from a distance. The worst of it is, one does not well see what use to make of the huge carcase."

"Why, make train oil, to be sure," said Ernest. "I can't say he's a beauty, though, and it is much pleasanter to gather these lovely shells than to cut up blubber."

"Well, let us amuse ourselves with them for the present," said I, "but in the afternoon, when the sea is calmer, we will return with the necessary implements, and see if we can turn the stranded whale to good account."

The boys found it hard work to row back, and began to beg of me to exert my wonderful inventive powers in contriving some kind of rowing machine.

"You lazy fellows!" returned I; "give me the great clockwork out of a church tower, and perhaps I might be able to relieve your labors."

The animated recital of our adventures, the sight of the lovely shells and corals, and the proposed work for the afternoon, inspired the mother and Franz with a great wish to accompany us.

Dinner was quickly dispatched, and preparations set on foot.

The more oil we could obtain the better, for a great deal was used in the large lantern which burnt day and night in the recesses of the cave; therefore all available casks and barrels were pressed into service. Many, of course, once full of

pickled herrings, potted pigeons, and other winter stores, were now empty, and we took a goodly fleet of these in tow.

Knives, hatchets, and the boy's climbing buskins were put on board, and we set forth, the labor of the oar being greater than ever, now that our freight was so much increased.

The sea being calm, and the tide suiting better, we found it easy to land close to the whale; my first care was to place the boat, as well as the casks, in perfect security, after which we proceeded to a close inspection of our prize.

Its enormous size quite startled my wife and her little boy; the length being from sixty to sixty-five feet, and the girth between thirty and forty, while the weight could not have been less than fifty thousand pounds.

"And now, boys, fasten on your buskins, and let me see if you can face the work of climbing this slippery mountain of flesh, and cutting it up," I said.

Fritz and Jack stripped, and went to work directly, scrambling over the back to the head, where they assisted me to cut away the lips, so as to reach the whalebone, a large quantity of which was detached and carried to the boat.

Ernest labored manfully at the creature's side, cutting out slabs of blubber, while his mother and Franz helped as well as they could to put it in casks.

Presently we had a multitude of unbidden guests.

The air was filled by the shrill screams and hoarse croaks and cries of numbers of birds of prey. They flew around us in ever narrowing circles, and becoming bolder as their voracity was excited by the near view of the tempting prey, they alighted close to us, snatching morsels greedily from under the very strokes of our knives and hatchets.

Our work was seriously interrupted by these feathered marauders, who, after all, were no greater robbers than we ourselves. We kept them off as well as we could by blows from our tools, and several were killed, my wife taking possession of them immediately for the sake of the feathers.

It was nearly time to leave the island, but first I stripped off a long piece of the skin, to be used for traces, harness, and other leather-work. It was about three-quarters of an inch thick, and very soft and oily—but I knew it would shrink and be tough and durable.

I also took a part of the gums in which the roots of the baleen or whalebone was still embedded, having read that this is considered quite a delicacy, as well as the skin, which, when properly dressed, and cut in little cubes, like black dice, has been compared, by enthusiastic and probably very hungry travelers, to cocoanut and cream-cheese.

The boys thought the tongue might prove equally palatable, but I valued it only on account of the large quantity of oil it contained.

With a heavy freight we put to sea, and made

what haste we could to reach home, and cleanse our persons from the unpleasant traces of the disgusting work in which we had spent the day.

Next morning we started at dawn.

My wife and Franz were left behind, for our proposed work was even more horrible than that of the preceding day; they could not assist, and had no inclination to witness it.

It was my intention to open the carcase completely, and, penetrating the interior, to obtain various portions of the intestines, thinking that it would be possible to convert the larger ones into vessels fit for holding the oil. This time we laid aside our clothes and wore only strong canvas trousers when we commenced operations, which were vigorously carried on during the whole of the day; then, satisfied that we could do so with a clear conscience, we abandoned the remains to the birds of prey, and, with a full cargo, set sail for land.

"What can have made you wish to bring away that brute's entrails, father? Are they of any use?" asked Ernest as we rowed.

"There are countries," I replied, "where no wood grows of which to make barrels, and no hemp for thread, string, and cordage. Necessity, the mother of all the more valuable inventions, has taught the inhabitants of those countries, Greenlanders, Esquimaux, and others, to think of substitutes, and they use the intestines of the whale for one purpose, the sinews and nerves for the other."

CHAPTER XI

A BOA CONSTRICTOR APPEARS

"Now for the finishing up of this dirty job," cried I, merrily, as we all woke up next morning at day-break. And after the regular work was done, we commenced operations by raising a stand or rough scaffold on which the tubs full of blubber were placed and heavily pressed, so that the purest and finest oil overflowed into vessels underneath.

The blubber was afterward boiled in a cauldron over a fire kindled at some distance from our abode, and by skimming and straining through a coarse cloth, we succeeded in obtaining a large supply of excellent train-oil, which in casks, and bags made of the intestines, was safely stowed away in the "cellar," as the children called our roughest store-room. This day's work was far from agreeable, and the dreadful smell oppressed us all, more especially my poor wife, who, nevertheless, endured it with her accustomed good temper.

The idea of a rowing-machine kept recurring to my brain. I determined to attempt to make one.

I took an iron bar, which when laid across the middle of the boat projected about a foot each way. I provided this bar in the middle with ribbed ma-

chinery, and at each end with a sort of nave, in which, as in a cart wheel, four flat spokes, or paddles, were fixed obliquely. These were intended to do the rowers' part.

Then the jack was arranged to act upon the machinery in the middle of the iron cross-bar in such a way that one of its strong cogwheels bit firmly into the ribs, so that, when it was wound up, it caused the bar to revolve rapidly, of course turning with it the paddles fixed at either end, which consequently struck the water so as to propel the boat.

Although this contrivance left much to be desired in the way of improvement, still when Fritz and I wound up the machinery, and went off on a trial trip across the bay, we splashed along at such a famous rate that the shores rang with the cheers and clapping of the whole family, delighted to behold what they considered my brilliant success.

Everyone wanted to go on board and take a cruise, but as it was getting late, I could not consent. A trip next day, however, was promised to Cape Disappointment and the little settlement of Prospect Hill.

With all six on board, we directed our course toward the opposite side of the bay. The sea was smooth, my rowing machine performed its work easily, and, leaving Safety Bay and Shark Island behind us, we enjoyed at our ease the panorama of all the coast scenery.



We walked through the woods to our little farm, obtaining some fresh cocoanuts on the way.

Landing near Prospect Hill, we moored the boat, and walked through the woods to our little farm, obtaining some fresh cocoanuts, as well as young plants, on the way.

So long had been our absence that our arrival created a perfect panic. The original animals had forgotten us, and to their progeny, lambs, kids, and chickens, who had never seen the face of man, we seemed an army of fierce foes.

The boys found it impossible to milk the goats, until, by the use of the lasso, they captured them one after the other, and bound their legs. Then giving them salt to lick, they soon obtained a supply of excellent milk, which was poured from the cocoanut shells they used into calabash flasks, so that we could take with us what was not required at dinner.

The fowls were enticed by handfuls of grain and rice, and my wife caught as many as she wished for.

We were by this time very ready for dinner, and the cold provisions we had with us were set forth, the chief dish consisting of the piece of whale's tongue, which, by the boys' desire, had been cooked with a special view to this entertainment.

But woeful was the disappointment when the tongue was tasted! One after another, with dismal face, pronounced it "horrid stuff," begged for some pickled herring to take away the taste of train-oil, and willingly bestowed on Fangs, our tame jackal, the cherished dainty. Fortunately

there was a sufficient supply of other eatables, and the fresh, delicious cocoanuts and goat's milk put everyone in good humor again.

While the mother packed everything up, Fritz and I got some sugar-cane shoots which I wished to plant on Whale Island, and then we returned to the shore and again embarked, landing safely at the usual place near Rockbury.

It had been my intention to bring a piece of land under cultivation before the next rainy season, to be sown with different sorts of grain; but many unforeseen circumstances had intervened to hinder this, and our animals, unaccustomed to the yoke, were not available for the plow.

I therefore gave up the idea for the present, and applied myself, with Ernest's assistance, to completing the loom, which, although the workmanship was clumsy, I succeeded in making quite fit for use. I had fortunately in my younger days spent many hours in the workshops of weavers and other artisans, and therefore I understood more than might have been expected of their various crafts.

Paste or size was required to smear over the threads; but we could not spare flour for such a purpose, and I used isinglass, which kept the warp moist perfectly well, and spared us the necessity of setting up the loom in a damp uncomfortable place, which has often to be done to prevent the over-drying of the web.

Success encouraging me to persevere, I next be-

gan harness-making; the spoils of the chase having furnished us with plenty of leather, with which I covered light frames of wood, using the hairy moss or lichen for stuffing, and ere long the animals were equipped with saddles, stirrups, bridles, yokes and collars, to the very great satisfaction of their youthful riders and drivers.

This occupation was followed by a great deal of work connected with the annual return of the her-ring shoals, which now took place; to them succeeding, as on former occasions, shoals of other fish, and many seals.

The boys were getting anxious for another shooting expedition; but before undertaking that, I wished to do some basket-making, as sacks were beginning to fail us, and there was constant demand for baskets in which to carry and keep our roots and fruits. Our first attempts were clumsy enough; but, as usual, perseverance was rewarded, and we produced a good supply of all sorts and sizes. One very large basket I furnished with openings through which to pass a strong stick, so that it might, when heavily laden, be carried by two persons.

No sooner did the children see the force of this idea, than they got a bamboo, and popping little Franz into the basket, carried him about in triumph.

This amusement suggested a fresh notion to Fritz. "Oh, father," cried he, "don't you think we might make something like this for mother, and

carry her much more comfortably than jolting along in the cart?"

The boys shouted with glee at the proposal, and though their mother thought the plan feasible enough, she confessed that she did not much like the thoughts of sitting in the middle of a basket, and just looking out now and then over the rim.

However, I assured her it should be a well-shaped, comfortable sedan-chair, or litter; and the next question was how it should be carried, since the boys could not play the part of Indian palanquin-bearers, either with safety to their mother or with any pleasure to themselves.

"The bull and the buffalo!" cried Jack. "Why not use them for it? Let's go and try them now!"

Off ran the boys, and in a short time the basket was securely hung between Storm and Grumble. Fritz and Jack sprang into their saddles, and Ernest very gingerly deposited himself in the "cradle," as Franz called it; they set forth at a most sober pace, the animals, who were perfectly docile, appearing only a little surprised at the new arrangement.

"Oh, it is so pleasant, mother, it is a delightful motion," cried Ernest, as they passed us; "it swings and rocks really soothingly. Quicker, Fritz! go quicker!" and the trot pleasing him equally well, the pace gradually quickened, till the animals were going along at a rate which shook and jolted the basket about most fearfully. Ernest called and screamed in vain for a halt. His brothers thought

it capital fun to "shake up" the "professor," and made the circuit of the level ground near Rockburg, finally pulling up in front of us like performers stopping to receive the applause of spectators.

It was impossible to help laughing, the scene was so ridiculous, but Ernest was very angry with his brothers, his reproaches provoked high words in reply, and a quarrel was imminent, but I interfered, and showed them how easily a joke, carried too far, would lead to disputes and bad feeling, urging them to avoid on all occasions any breach of the good fellowship and brotherly love which was the mainstay of our strength and happiness.

Good humor was soon restored, Ernest himself helped to unharness the beasts, and got some handfuls of salt and barley to reward their exertions, saying that they must have some more palanquin-practice another day.

I was seated with my wife and Fritz beneath the shade of the veranda, engaged in wicker-work, and chatting pleasantly, when suddenly Fritz got up, advanced a step or two, gazing fixedly along the avenue which led from Jackal River, then he exclaimed:

"I see something so strange in the distance, father! What in the world can it be? First it seems to be drawn in coils on the ground like a cable, then uprises as it were a little mast, then that sinks, and the coils move along again. It is coming toward the bridge."

My wife took alarm at this description, and calling the other boys, retreated into the cave, where I desired them to close up the entrances, and keep watch with the firearms at the upper windows. These were openings we had made in the rock at some elevation, reached within by steps, and a kind of gallery which passed along the front of the rooms.

Fritz remained by me while I examined the object through my spyglass.

"It is, as I feared, an enormous serpent!" cried I.

"May we not attack it, father?" exclaimed the brave boy.

"Only with the greatest caution," returned I; "it is far too formidable, and too tenacious of life, for us rashly to attempt its destruction. Thank God, we are at Rockburg, where we can keep in safe retreat, while we watch for an opportunity to destroy this frightful enemy. Go up to your mother now, and assist in preparing the firearms; I will join you directly, but I must further observe the monster's movements."

Fritz left me unwillingly, while I continued to watch the serpent, which was of gigantic size, and already much too near the bridge to admit of the possibility of removing that means of access to our dwelling. I recollected, too, how easily it would pass through the walls. The reptile advanced with writhing and undulatory movements, from time to time rearing its head to the height of fifteen

or twenty feet, and slowly turning it about, as though on the lookout for prey.

As it crossed the bridge, with a slow, suspicious motion, I withdrew, and hastily rejoined my little party, which was preparing to garrison our fortress in warlike array, but with considerable trepidation, which my presence served in a measure to allay.

We placed ourselves at the upper openings, after strongly barricading everything below, and, ourselves unseen, awaited with beating hearts the further advance of the foe, which speedily became visible to us.

Its movements appeared to become uncertain, as though puzzled by the trace of human habitation; it turned in different directions, coiling and uncoiling, and frequently rearing its head, but keeping about the middle of the space in front of the cave, when suddenly, as though unable to resist doing so, one after another the boys fired, and even their mother discharged her gun. The shots took not the slightest effect beyond startling the monster, whose movements were accelerated. Fritz and I also fired with steadier aim, but with the same want of success, for the monster, passing on with a gliding motion, entered the reedy marsh to the left, and entirely disappeared.

A wonderful weight seemed lifted from our hearts, while all eagerly discussed the vast length and awful though magnificent appearance of the serpent. I had recognized it as the boa constrictor.

tor. It was a vast specimen, upward of thirty feet in length.

During three whole days we were kept in suspense and fear, not daring to stir above a few hundred steps from the door, although during all that time the enemy showed no sign of his presence.

In fact, we might have been induced to think the boa had passed across the swamp, and found his way by some cleft or chasm through the wall of cliffs beyond, had not the restless behavior of our geese and ducks given proof that he still lurked in the thicket of reeds which they were accustomed to make their nightly resting place.

They swam anxiously about, and with much clapping of wings and disturbed cackling showed their uneasiness; finally taking wing they crossed the harbor, and took up their quarters on Shark Island.

My embarrassment increased, as time passed on. I could not venture to attack with insufficient force a monstrous and formidable serpent concealed in dense thickets amidst dangerous swamps; yet it was dreadful to live in a state of blockade, cut off from all the important duties in which we were engaged, and shut up with our animals in the unnatural light of the cave, enduring constant anxiety and perturbation.

Our situation was rendered the more critical from having no great stock of provisions, or fodder for the animals; and the hay failing us on the evening of the third day, I determined to set them

at liberty by sending them, under the guidance of Fritz, across the river at the ford.

He was to ride Lightfoot, and they were to be fastened together until safely over.

Next morning we began to prepare for this by tying them in a line, and while so engaged my wife opened the door, when old Grizzle, who was fresh and frolicsome after the long rest and regular feeding, suddenly broke away from the halter, cut some awkward capers, then bolting out, careered at full gallop straight for the marsh.

In vain we called him by name. Fritz would even have rushed after him, had not I held him back. In another moment the ass was close to the thicket, and with the cold shudder of horror, we beheld the snake rear itself from its lair, the fiery eyes glanced around, the dark, deadly jaws opened widely, the forked tongue darted greedily forth—poor Grizzle's fate was sealed.

Becoming aware on a sudden of his danger, he stopped short, spread out all four legs, and set up the most piteous and discordant bray that ever wrung echo from rocks.

Swift and straight as a fencer's thrust, the destroyer was upon him, wound round him, entangled, enfolded, compressed him, all the while cunningly avoiding the convulsive kicks of the agonized animal.

A cry of horror arose from the spectators of this miserable tragedy.

"Shoot him, father! oh, shoot him—do save poor Grizzle!"

"My children, it is impossible!" cried I. "Our old friend is lost to us for ever! I have hopes, however, that when gorged with his prey we may be able to attack the snake with some chance of success."

"But the horrible wretch is never going to swallow him all at once, father?" cried Jack. "That will be too shocking!"

"Snakes have no grinders, but only fangs, therefore they cannot chew their food, and must swallow it whole. But although the idea is startling, it is not really more shocking than the rending, tearing, and shedding of blood which occurs when the lions and tigers seize their prey."

"But," said Franz, "how can the snake separate the flesh from the bones without teeth? And is this kind of snake poisonous?"

"No, dear child," said I, "only fearfully strong and ferocious. And it has no need to tear the flesh from the bones. It swallows them, skin, hair, and all, and digests everything in its stomach."

"It seems utterly impossible that the broad ribs, the strong legs, hoofs, and all, should go down that throat," exclaimed Fritz.

"Only see," I replied, "how the monster deals with his victim; closer and more tightly he curls his crushing folds, the bones give way, he is kneading him into a shapeless mass. He will soon begin

to gorge his prey, and slowly but surely it will disappear down that distended maw!"

The mother, with little Franz, found the scene all too horrible, and hastened into the cave, trembling and distressed.

To the rest of us there seemed a fearful fascination in the dreadful sight, and we could not move from the spot. I expected that the boa, before swallowing his prey, would cover it with saliva, to aid in the operation, although it struck me that its very slender forked tongue was about the worst possible implement for such a purpose.

It was evident to us, however, that this popular idea was erroneous.

The act of lubricating the mass must have taken place during the process of swallowing; certainly nothing was applied beforehand.

This wonderful performance lasted from seven in the morning until noon. When the awkward morsel was entirely swallowed, the serpent lay stiff, distorted, and apparently insensible along the edge of the marsh.

I felt that now or never was the moment for attack!

Calling on my sons to maintain their courage and presence of mind, I left our retreat with a feeling of joyous emotion quite new to me, and approached with rapid steps and leveled gun the outstretched form of the serpent. Fritz followed me closely.

Jack, somewhat timidly, came several paces be-

hind; while Ernest, after a little hesitation, remained where he was.

The monster's body was stiff and motionless, which made its rolling and fiery eyes, and the slow, spasmodic undulations of its tail more fearful by contrast.

We fired together, and both balls entered the skull; the light of the eye was extinguished, and the only movement was in the further extremity of the body, which rolled, writhed, coiled, and lashed from side to side.

Advancing closer, we fired our pistols directly into its head, a convulsive quiver ran through the mighty frame, and the boa constrictor lay dead.

As we raised a cry of victory, Jack, desirous of a share in the glory of conquest, ran close to the creature, firing his pistol into its side, when he was sent sprawling over and over by a movement of its tail, excited to a last galvanic effort by the shot.

Being in no way hurt, he speedily recovered his feet, and declared he had given it its quietus.

"I hope the terrible noise you made just now was the signal of victory," said my wife, drawing near, with the utmost circumspection, and holding Franz tightly by the hand. "I was half afraid to come, I assure you."

"See this dreadful creature dead at our feet; and let us thank God that we have been able to destroy such an enemy."

"Come, Ernest, can you not give us an epitaph

for our unfortunate friend the donkey?" I added. "We must afford him more honorable sepulture than he enjoys at present, when we proceed, as we speedily must, to disembowel his murderer."

The first operation was to recover the mangled remains of the ass, which being effected, he was buried in the soft marshy ground close by, and the hole filled up with fragments of rock.

Then we yoked Storm and Grumble to the serpent, and dragged it to a convenient distance from Rockburg, where the process of skinning, stuffing, and sewing up again afforded occupation of the deepest interest to the boys for several days.

We took great pains to coil it round a pole in the museum, arranging the head with the jaws wide open, so as to look as alarming as possible, and contriving to make eyes and tongue sufficiently well to represent nature; in fact, our dogs never passed the monster without growling, and must have wondered at our taste in keeping such a pet.

Over the entrance leading to the museum and library were inscribed these words:

NO ADMITTANCE FOR ASSES.

The double meaning of this sentence pleased us all immensely.

CHAPTER XII

WE ENCOUNTER BEARS

The greatest danger to which we had yet been exposed was now over, but there remained much anxiety in my mind lest another serpent might, unseen by us, have entered the swamp, or might appear, as this had done, from the country beyond Falconhurst.

I projected then two excursions, the first to make a thorough examination of the thicket and morass; the next right away to the Gap, through which alone the arch-enemy could have entered our territory.

On summoning my sons to accompany me to the marsh, I found neither Ernest nor Jack very eager to do so, the latter vowing he had the cold shivers each time he thought how his ribs might have been smashed by the last flap of the snake's tail; but I did not yield to their reluctance, and we finally set about crossing the marsh by placing planks and wicker hurdles on the ground, and changing their places as we advanced.

Nothing was discovered beyond tracks in the reeds and the creature's lair, where the rushes, grass, and bog-plants were beaten down.

Emerging beyond the thicket we found ourselves on firm ground, near the precipitous wall of rock, and perceived a clear sparkling brook flowing from an opening, which proved to be a cave or grotto of considerable size.

The vaulted roof was covered with stalactites, while many formed stately pillars, which seemed as though supporting the roof. The floor was strewn with fine snow-white earth, with a smooth soapy feeling, which I felt convinced was fuller's earth.

"Well, this is a pleasant discovery!" said I. "This is as good as soap for washing, and will save me the trouble of turning soap-boiler."

Perceiving that the streamlet flowed from an opening of some width in the inner rock, Fritz passed through, in order to trace it to its source, presently shouting to me that the opening widened very much, and begging me to follow him.

I did so, leaving the other boys in the outer cave, and fired a pistol-shot—the reverberating echoes of which testified to the great extent of the place; and lighting the bit of candle I always carried with me, we advanced, the light burning clear and steadily, though shedding a very feeble light in so vast a space.

On reaching the open air we found Ernest busily engaged in weaving a basket in which to catch fish; he had devised it ingeniously, with a funnel-shaped entrance; through which the fish passing would not easily find their way out, but would remain

swimming about in the wide part of the apparatus.

"I shot a young serpent while you were away, father," said he. "It lies there covered with rushes; it is nearly four feet long, and as thick as my arm."

"A serpent!" cried I, hurrying toward it in alarm, and fearing there must be a brood of them in the swamp after all. But viewing it, I added, "A fine large eel, you mean, my boy. This will provide an excellent supper for us to-night. I am glad you had the courage to kill it, instead of taking to your heels and fleeing from the supposed serpent."

"Well, I thought it would be so horrid to be pursued and caught that I preferred facing it; my shot took effect, but it was very difficult to kill the creature outright, it moved about although its head was smashed."

We made our way back more easily by keeping close to the cliffs, where the ground was firmer, and found the mother washing clothes at the fountain. She rejoiced greatly at our safe return, and was much pleased with the supply of fuller's earth, as she said there was now very little soap left.

It was most important to ascertain whether any serpent lurked among the woods of our little territory between the cliffs and the sea. Preparations were set on foot for the second and greater undertaking of a search throughout the country beyond the river, as far as the Gap. I wished all the

family to go on the expedition, a decision which gave universal satisfaction.

Intending to be engaged in this search for several weeks, we took the small tent and a store of all sorts of necessary provisions, as well as firearms, tools, cooking utensils, and torches.

All these things were packed on the cart, which was drawn by Storm and Grumble. Jack and Franz mounted them, and acted at once the part of riders and drivers. My wife sat comfortably in the cart, Fritz rode in advance, while Ernest and I walked; we were protected on flank by the dogs and Fangs, the tame jackal.

Directing our course toward Woodlands, we saw many traces of the serpent's approach to Rockburg. In some places, where the soil was loose, the trail, like a broad furrow, was very evident indeed.

At Falconhurst we made a halt, and were, as usual, welcomed by the poultry, as well as by the sheep and goats.

We then passed on to Woodlands, where we arrived at nightfall. All was peaceful and in good order; no track of the boa in that direction; no signs of visits from mischievous apes; the little farm and its inhabitants looked most flourishing.

Next day was passed in making a survey of the immediate neighborhood, at the same time collecting a quantity of cotton, which was wanted for new pillows and cushions. In the afternoon Franz was my companion, carrying a small gun entrusted to him for the first time.

All at once there was a great rustling in the thicket, Franz fired, and I heard his happy voice calling out:

"I've hit him! I've hit him!"

"What have you hit?" shouted I in return.

"A wild pig," said he; "but bigger than Fritz's."

"Aha! I see you remember the agouti! Perhaps it is not a hog at all but one of our little pigs from the farm. What will the old sow say to you, Franz?"

I soon joined my boy, and found him in transports of joy over an animal certainly very much like a pig, although its snout was broad and blunt. It was covered with bristles, had no tail, and in color was a yellowish gray.

Examining it carefully, and noticing its web feet and its curious teeth, I decided that it must be a capybara, a water-loving animal of South America, and Franz was overjoyed to find that he had shot "a new creature," as he said. It was difficult to carry it home, but he very sensibly proposed that we should open and clean the carcass, which would make it lighter—and then putting it in a game bag, he carried it till quite tired out; he then asked if I thought Bruno would let him strap it on his back. We found the dog willing to bear the burden, and reached Woodlands soon afterward.

We sat down to supper, Franz eager to partake of his capybara, but even he himself made a face at the peculiar flavor of the meat.

"It is the musk which you taste," said I; and I described to them the various animals in which this strange liquid is found; the musk deer, musk ox, crocodile, muskrat of India (also called soudeli, which taints a corked bottle of wine, if it only runs across it), concluding with an account of the civet, called also civet-rat.

Everyone seeming wearied by the fatigues of the day, our mattresses and pillows were arranged, and the inmates of Woodlands betook themselves to repose.

With early light we commenced the next day's journey, directing our course to a point between the sugar-brake and the Gap, where we had once made a sort of arbor of the branches of trees; as this remained in pretty good condition, we spread a sailcloth over the top of it, instead of pitching the tent, and made it very comfortable quarters for the short time I proposed to stay there.

Our object being to search the neighborhood for traces of the boa constrictor, or any of his kindred, Fritz, Jack, and Franz went with me to the sugar-cane brake, and satisfied ourselves that our enemy had not been there. It was long since we had enjoyed the fresh juice of these canes, and we refreshed ourselves therewith.

One day we made an excursion to the farm at Prospect Hill, and were grievously provoked to find that the vagabond apes had been there, and wrought terrible mischief.

The animals and poultry were scattered, and

everything in the cottage so torn and dirtied that it was vain to think of setting things right that day. We therefore very unwillingly left the disorder as we found it, purposing to devote time to the work afterward.

The ground was open and tolerably level beyond, so that in a few hours we arrived at the extreme limit of our coast territory.

We halted on the outskirts of a little wood, behind which, to the right, rose the precipitous and frowning cliffs of the mountain gorge, while to the left flowed the torrent, leaving between it and the rocks the narrow pass we called the Gap, and passing onward to mingle its water with the sea.

The wood afforded us pleasant shelter, and standing high, and within gunshot of the mouth of the rocky pass, I resolved to make it our camping place. We therefore unpacked the cart, and made our usual arrangements for safety and comfort, not forgetting to examine the wood itself, so as to ascertain whether it harbored any dangerous animals.

Nothing worse than wild cats was discovered. We disturbed several of these creatures in their pursuit of birds and small game, but they fled at our approach.

By the time dinner was ready we felt much fatigued, and some hours of unusually sultry and oppressive heat compelled us to rest until toward evening, when returning coolness revived our strength. We pitched the tent, and then occupied

ourselves with preparations for the next day, when it was my intention to penetrate the country beyond the defile, and make a longer excursion across the savannah than had yet been undertaken.

All was ready for a start at an early hour; my brave wife consented to remain in camp with Franz as her companion, while the three elder boys, and all the dogs, except Juno, went with me.

We expected to find it somewhat difficult to make our way through the narrowest part of the pass, which had been so strongly barricaded and planted with thorny shrubs, but found on the contrary that the fences and walls were broken down and disarranged. It was thus very evident that the great snake had made an entrance here.

This barricade was the first check that had been placed by hand of man upon the wild free will of nature in this lonely place.

With one consent storms, floods, torrents, and the wild beasts of the forest had set themselves to destroy it.

We resolved to make the defenses doubly strong, being convinced that the position was capable of being barricaded and fortified so as to resist the invaders we dreaded.

The prospect which opened before us on emerging from the rocky pass was wide and varied. Swelling hills and verdant wooded vales were seen on one hand, while a great plain stretched before us, extending from the banks of the river toward a chain of lofty mountains, whose summits were

rendered indistinct in the haze of the distance.

We crossed the stream, which we named East River, filling our flasks with water, and it was well we did so, for in continuing our journey, we found the soil became more arid and parched than we had expected; in fact we soon appeared surrounded by a desert.

The boys were astonished at the altered appearance of the country, part of which had been explored when we met with the buffaloes. I reminded them of the difference of the season; that the expedition had been made directly after the rains, when vegetation had clothed with transient beauty this region, which, possessing no source of moisture itself, had become scathed and bare during the blazing heat of summer.

Our march proceeded slowly, and many were the uncomplimentary remarks made on the "new country."

It was "Arabia Petrea," groaned one. "Desert of Sahara," sighed another. "Fit abode for demons," muttered a third. "Subterranean volcanic fires are raging beneath our feet."

"Patience, my good fellows!" cried I; "you are too easily discouraged. Look beyond the toilsome way to those grand mountains, whose spurs are already stretching forward to meet us. Who knows what pleasant surprises await us amid their steep declivities? I, for my part, expect to find water, fresh grass, trees, and a lovely resting-place."

We were all glad to repose beneath the shade of

the first over-hanging rock we came to, although, by pressing further upward, we might have attained to a pleasanter spot.

After gazing on the distant scene, we produced our store of provisions, and were busily engaged, when Knips (our constant companion) suddenly began to snuff and smell about in a very ridiculous way; finally, with a shriek which we knew was expressive of pleasure, he set off at full speed, followed by all the dogs, up a sort of glen behind us. We left them to their own devices, being far too pleasantly engaged with our refreshments to care what fancy the little rogue had got into his head.

When hunger was somewhat appeased, Fritz once more cast his eyes over the expanse of plain before us, and after looking fixedly for a moment, exclaimed: "Is it possible that I see a party of horsemen riding at full gallop toward us? Can they be wild Arabs of the desert?"

"Arabs, my boy! certainly not; but take the spy-glass and make them out exactly. We shall have to be on our guard, whatever they are!"

The spyglass passed from hand to hand; Jack and Ernest agreed in thinking the moving objects were men on horseback; but when it came my turn to look, I at once pronounced them to be very large ostriches.

"This is fortunate, indeed!" I exclaimed; "we must try to secure one of these magnificent birds; the feathers alone are worth having."

As the ostriches approached, we began to con-

sider in what way we should attempt a capture. I sent Fritz and Jack to recall the dogs, and placed myself with Ernest behind some shrubs which would conceal us from the birds as they came onward.

The boys did not rejoin us for some little time; they found Knips and the dogs at a pool of water formed by a small mountain stream, which the monkey's instinct had detected; his sudden departure was thus accounted for, and they availed themselves right gladly of his discovery, filling their flasks, and hastily bathing before their return.

The ostriches continued to come in our direction, varying their pace as though in sport, springing, trotting, galloping, and chasing each other round and round, so that their approach was by no means rapid.

I could now perceive that of the five birds one only was a male, the white plumes of the wings and tail contrasting finely with the deep glossy black of neck and body. The females being ashen brown, the effect of their white plumes was not so handsome.

"I do not believe we shall have a chance with these birds," said I, "except by sending Fritz's eagle in pursuit; and for that we must bide our time, and let them come as near as possible."

The dogs became impatient, struggled from our grasp, and furiously rushed toward our astonished visitors. In an instant they turned and fled with the speed of the wind; their feet seemed not to

touch the ground, their wings aiding the marvelously rapid progress.

In a few moments they would have been beyond our reach, but as they turned to fly the eagle was unhooded. Singling out the male bird the falcon made his fatal swoop, and piercing the skull, the magnificent creature was laid low. Before we could reach the spot the dogs had joined the bird of prey, and were fiercely tearing the flesh and bedabbling the splendid plumes with gore.

"What a pity we could not capture this glorious bird alive!" exclaimed Fritz, as we took its beautiful feathers. "It must, I am sure, have stood more than six feet high, and two of us might have mounted him at once!"

"What does Jack mean by waving his cap and beckoning in that excited fashion? What has the boy found, I wonder?"

He ran a little way toward us, shouting:

"Eggs, father! Ostriches' eggs! a huge nest full—do come quick!"

We all hastened to the spot, and in a slight hollow of the ground beheld more than twenty eggs, as large as an infant's head.

The idea of carrying more than two away with us was preposterous, although the boys, forgetting what the weight would be, seriously contemplated clearing the nest. They were satisfied when a kind of landmark had been set up, so that if we returned we might easily find the nest.

As each egg weighed about three pounds, the

boys soon found the burden considerable, even when tied into a handkerchief and carried like a basket. To relieve them, I cut a strong elastic heath stick, and suspending an egg in its sling at each end, laid the bent stick over Jack's shoulder, and like a Dutch dairy-maid with her milk pails, he stepped merrily along without inconvenience.

Resuming our journey, we arrived at a charming valley, verdant, fruitful, and shaded by clumps of graceful trees, which we agreed to call Glen Verdant.

Following the imperceptible windings of the vale, we were surprised, on quitting it for the more open ground, to find ourselves in a country we were already acquainted with, and not far from the Jackal Cave, as we called the place where Fangs had been captured in cubhood.

On recognizing the spot, Ernest, who was in advance with one of the dogs, hastened toward it. We lost sight of him for a few minutes, and then arose a cry of terror, violent barking, and deep, surly growls.

As we rushed forward, Ernest met us, looking white as ashes, and calling out: "A bear, a bear, father! He is coming after me!"

The boy clung to me in mortal fear. I felt his whole frame quivering.

"Courage, my son!" cried I, disengaging myself; "we must prepare for instant defense!"

The dogs dashed forward to join the fray, whatever it was; and not long were we in doubt. To

my no small consternation, an enormous bear made his appearance, quickly followed by another.

With leveled guns, my brave Fritz and I advanced slowly to meet them. Jack was also ready to fire, but the shock had so unnerved Ernest that he fairly took to his heels. We fired together, one at each bear; but though hit, the monsters were unfortunately only wounded. We found it most difficult to take aim, as the dogs beset them on all sides. However, they were much disabled, one having the lower jaw broken, and the other, with a bullet in his shoulder, was effectually lamed. The dogs, perceiving their advantage, pressed more closely round their foes, who yet defended themselves furiously, with frightful yells of pain and rage. Such was the confusion and perpetual movement of the struggle, that I dared not fire again, seeing that even slightly wounding one of our gallant hounds would instantly place him in the power of the raging bears.

Watching our opportunity, we suddenly advanced with loaded pistols to within a very few paces and firing, both fell dead, one shot through the head, while the other, in the act of rearing to spring on Fritz, receiving his charge in its heart.

Seeing all safe, Jack raised a shout of victory, that poor Ernest might gain courage to approach the scene of conflict which at last he did, and joined us in examining the dangerous animals, as they lay motionless before us.

As evening drew on, we dragged the huge car-



"A bear, a bear, father! He is coming after me!"

casses into their den, to await our return, concealing them with boughs of trees and fencing the entrance as well as we could. The ostrich eggs we also left behind us, hidden in a sandy hole. By sunset we reached the tent, and joyfully rejoined the mother and Franz, right glad to find a hearty meal prepared for us, as well as a large heap of brushwood for the watch-fire.

After breakfast and our accustomed devotions next morning, we harnessed the cart, and took the way to the bear's den. Determining to smoke the meat on the spot, we cut magnificent hams, and took off the rest of the meat in slices after the manner of buccaneers in the West Indies, preserving the paws entire to be cooked as a delicacy, and obtaining from the two bears together a prodigious supply of lard. The bones and offal we drew to some distance with the help of our cattle, and made the birds of the air most welcome to feast upon it. This they did so effectually that before we left the place the skulls were picked perfectly clean, the sun had dried them, and they were ready for us to carry to our museum. The skins had to be very carefully scraped, washed, salted, cleansed with ashes, and dried; which occupied fully two days.

The four boys at length became so weary of inaction during this tedious business that I determined to let them make an excursion alone on the savannah. Three of them received this permission with eager delight, but Ernest said he would prefer to remain with us.

CHAPTER XIII

AN OSTRICH CAPTURED

As evening approached, the bears' paws, which were stewing for supper, sent forth savory odors; and we sat talking round the fire, while listening anxiously for sounds heralding the return of our young explorers. At last the tramp and beat of hoofs struck our ears; the little troop appeared, crossing the open ground before us at a sharp trot, and shrill ringing cheers greeted us as we went to meet them.

They sprang from their saddles, the animals were set at liberty to refresh themselves, and the riders eagerly came to exhibit their acquisitions.

Funny figures they cut! Franz and Jack had each a young kid slung on his back, so that the four legs, tied together, stuck out under their chins.

Fritz's game bag looked remarkably queer—round lumps, sharp points, and an occasional movement seemed to indicate a living creature or creatures within.

"Hurrah for the chase, father!" cried Jack. "Nothing like real hunting after all. And just to see how Storm and Grumble go along over a grassy plain! It is splendid! We soon tired out the

little antelopes, and were able to catch them."

"Yes, father," said Franz; "and Fritz has two Angora rabbits in his bag, and we wanted to bring you some honey. Only think! such a clever bird—a cuckoo, showed us where it was!"

"My brothers forget the chief thing," said Fritz. "We have driven a little herd of antelopes right through the Gap into our territory; and there they are, all ready for us to hunt when we like—or to catch and tame!"

"Well done!" cried I; "here is indeed a list of achievements. But to your mother and me the chief thing of all is God's goodness in bringing you safe back to us."

Supper over, we lit our watch-fire, retired to our tent, and slept soundly. I wished to make yet another excursion, and at early dawn I aroused the boys.

Fritz mounted the mule, I rode Lightfoot, Jack and Franz took their usual steeds, and, with the two dogs, we galloped off—to discover whether the ostrich had deserted her eggs in the sand. Ernest watched us depart without the slightest look or sigh of regret, and returned to the tent to assist his mother and study his books.

Our steeds carried us down the Green Valley at a rapid rate, and we followed the direction we had pursued on our former expedition. We soon reached Turtle Marsh, and then, filling our water-flasks, we arrived at the rising ground where Fritz discovered the mounted Arabs.

As Jack and Franz wanted a gallop, I allowed them to press forward. They were at some distance from us, when suddenly four ostriches rose from the sand where they had been sitting.

Jack and Franz perceived them, and, with a great shout, drove them toward us. In front ran a splendid male bird, his feathers shining black, and his great tail plume waving behind. Three females of an ashen gray color followed him. They approached us with incredible swiftness, and were within gunshot before they perceived us. Fritz had had the forethought to bind up the beak of his eagle so that, should he bring down an ostrich, he might be unable to injure it.

He now threw up the falcon which, towering upward, swooped down upon the head of the foremost bird, and so confused and alarmed him that he could not defend himself nor continue his flight. So greatly was his speed checked that Jack overtook him, and hurling his lasso, enfolded his wings and legs in its deadly coils and brought him to the ground. The other ostriches were almost out of sight, so leaving them to their own devices, we leaped from our steeds and attempted to approach the captured bird. He struggled fearfully, and kicked with such violence, right and left, that I almost despaired of getting him home alive.

It occurred to me, however, that if we could cover his eyes, his fury might be subdued. I instantly acted upon this idea, and flung over his head my coat and hunting-bag, which shut out the light.

No sooner had I done this than his struggles ceased, and we were able to approach. We first secured round his body a broad strip of sealskin,



I instantly acted upon this idea, and flung over his head my coat and hunting-bag.

on each side of which I fastened a stout piece of cord, that I might be able to lead him easily. Then, fastening another cord in a loop round his legs to prevent him from breaking into a gallop,

we released him from the coils of the lasso.

Storm and Grumble were led up on either side of the recumbent ostrich, and the cords secured to their girths. Jack and Franz, each armed with a stout whip, mounted their respective steeds, the wrappers were removed from the bird's eyes, and we stood by to watch what would next occur.

For some moments after the return of his sight he lay perfectly still, then he arose with a bound and, not aware of the cords which hampered him, attempted to dash forward. The thongs were stout, and he was brought to his knees. A fruitless struggle ensued, and then at length, seeming to accommodate himself to circumstances, he set off at a sharp trot, his guards making the air re-echo with their merry shouts. These cries stimulated the ostrich to yet further exertions, but he was at length brought to a stand by the determined refusal of his four-footed companions to continue such a race across the loose sand.

Astonishment and dismay were depicted on the face of the mother as we approached.

"My dear husband," she exclaimed, "do you think our provisions so abundant that you must scour the deserts to find some great beast to assist us to devour them? You must discover an iron mine next, for iron is what ostriches chiefly live on, is it not? Oh! I do wish you would be content with the menagerie you have already collected. And this is such a useless monster!"

"Useless, mother?" exclaimed Jack; "you would

not say so had you seen him run; why, he will be the fleetest courser in our stables. I am going to make a saddle and bridle for him, and in future he shall be my only steed. Then as for his appetite, father declares it is most delicate; he only wants a little fruit and grass, and a few stones and tenpenny nails to help his digestion."

The way in which Jack assumed the proprietorship of our new prize seemed to strike his brothers as rather cool, and there was instantly a cry raised on the subject.

"Very well," said Jack, "let us each take possession of the part of the ostrich we captured. Your bird, Fritz, seized the head, keep that; father shall have the body, I'll have the legs, and Franz a couple of feathers from the tail."

"Come, come," said I, "I think that Jack has a very good right to the ostrich, seeing that he brought it to the ground, and if he succeeds in taming it and converting it into a saddle horse it shall be his. From this time, therefore, he is responsible for its training."

At early dawn our picturesque caravan was moving homeward. The ostrich continued so refractory that we were obliged to make him again march between Storm and Grumble, so the cow was harnessed to the cart, laden with our treasures. Room for the mother was left in the cart which Ernest drove, Jack and Franz mounted Storm and Grumble, I rode Lightfoot, and Fritz brought up the rear on Swift.

As agriculture was, though the least to our taste, the most important of our several duties, we set about it first. The animals drew the plow, but the digging and hoeing taxed our powers of endurance to the utmost. We worked two hours in the morning and two in the evening.

In the interval we devoted our attention to the ostrich. But our efforts on behalf of his education seemed all in vain. He appeared as untamable as ever. I determined, therefore, to adopt the plan which had subdued the refractory eagle.

The effect of the tobacco fumes almost alarmed me. The ostrich sank to the ground and lay motionless. Slowly, at length, he arose, and paced up and down between two bamboo posts to which he was tied. He was subdued, but to my dismay resolutely refused all food. I feared he would die; for three days he pined, growing weaker and weaker each day.

"Food he must have!" said I to my wife; "food he must have!" The mother determined to attempt an experiment. She prepared balls of maize flour, mixed with butter. One of these she placed within the bird's beak. He swallowed it, and stretched out his long neck, looking inquiringly for a second mouthful. A second, third, and fourth ball followed the first. His appetite returned, and his strength came again.

All the wild nature of the bird had gone, and I saw with delight that we might begin his educa-

tion as soon as we chose. Rice, guavas, maize, and corn he ate readily—*washing it down*, as Jack expressed it, with small pebbles.

After a month of careful training, our captive would trot, gallop, obey the sound of our voice, feed from our hand; and, in fact, showed himself perfectly docile. Now our ingenuity was taxed to the utmost. How were we to saddle and bridle a bird? First, for a bit for his beak. Vague ideas passed through my mind, but every one I was obliged to reject. A plan at length occurred to me. I recollected the effect of light and its absence upon the ostrich, how his movements were checked by sudden darkness, and how, with light, power returned to his limbs.

I immediately constructed a leathern hood, to reach from the neck to the beak, cutting holes in it for eyes and ears. Over the eyeholes I contrived square flaps or blinkers, which were so arranged with whalebone springs that they closed tightly of themselves. The reins were connected with these blinkers, so that the flaps might be raised or allowed to close at the rider's pleasure.

When both blinkers were open, the ostrich would gallop straight ahead; close his right eye and he turned to the left, close his left and he turned to the right, shut both and he stood stock still.

I was justly proud of my contrivance, but, before I could really test its utility, I was obliged to make a saddle. After several failures, I succeeded in manufacturing one to my liking, and in



"We soon tired out the little antelopes."

properly securing it; it was something like an old-fashioned trooper's saddle, peaked before and behind—for my great fear was lest the boys should fall. This curious-looking contrivance I placed upon the shoulders as near the neck as possible, and secured it with strong girths round the wings and across the breast, to avoid all possibility of the saddle slipping down the bird's sloping back.

I soon saw that my plan would succeed, though skill and considerable practice was necessary in the use of my patent bridle. It was difficult to remember that to check the courser's speed it was necessary to slacken rein, and that the tighter the reins were drawn, the faster he would fly. We at length, however, all learned to manage Master Hurricane, and the distance between Rockburg and Falconhurst was traversed in an almost incredibly short space of time.

The rainy season again set in. Even in the spacious house which we now occupied, and with our varied and interesting employments, we yet found the time dragging heavily. The spirits of all were depressed. Fritz, as well as I, had perceived this, and he said to me:

"Why, father, should we not make a canoe, something swifter and more manageable than those vessels we as yet possess? I often long for a light skiff, in which I might skim over the water."

The boys were interested, and the boat-building was soon in operation. The Greenlander's cajack I

intended to be my model, and I resolved not only to occupy the children, but also to produce a strong and serviceable canoe—a masterpiece of art. We constructed the skeleton of whalebone, using split bamboo canes to strengthen the sides and also to form the deck, which extended the whole length of the boat, leaving merely a square hole in which the occupant of the canoe might sit.

Our front door was just wide enough to admit of the egress of our boat, and we completed her construction in the open air. We quickly cased the sides and deck with sealskin, making all the seams thoroughly watertight with caoutchouc.

The cajack was indeed a curious looking craft, yet so light that she might be lifted easily with one hand, and when at length we launched her she bounded upon the water like an india-rubber ball. Fritz was unanimously voted her rightful owner, but before his mother would hear of his entering the frail-looking skiff she declared that she must contrive a swimming dress, that “should his boat receive a puncture from a sharp rock or the dorsal fin of a fish and collapse, he might yet have a chance of saving his life.”

The garment she produced was most curious in appearance, and I must own that I doubted its efficiency. It was like a double waistcoat, made of linen prepared with a solution of india-rubber, the seams being likewise coated with caoutchouc, and the whole rendered perfectly airtight. We so arranged it that one little hole was left, by means of

which air could be forced into the space between the outer covering and the lining, and the dress inflated.

The dress was at length completed, and Fritz one fine afternoon offered publicly to prove it. We all assembled on the beach, the boy gravely donned and inflated the garment, and, amid roars of laughter from his brothers, entered the water. Quickly and easily he paddled himself across the bay toward Shark Island, whither we followed in one of our boats.

The experiment was most successful, and Ernest, Jack, and Franz, in spite of their laughter at their brother's garment, begged their mother to make for each of them a similar dress.

Then came the day when Fritz was to make his trial trip with the cajak. Completely equipped in swimming costume, it was most ludicrous to see him cower down in the canoe and puff and blow till he began to swell like the frog in the fable.

All trace of his original figure was speedily lost, and shouts of laughter greeted his comical appearance. Even his mother could not resist a smile, although the dress was her invention.

I got the other boat out, that my wife might see we were ready to go to his assistance the moment it became necessary.

The cajak was launched from a convenient shelving point, and floated lightly on the sea-green ocean mirror. Fritz with his paddles then began to practise all manner of evolutions: darting along

with arrowy swiftness, wheeling to the right, then to the left; and at last flinging himself quite on his side, while his mother uttered a shriek of terror, he showed that the tiny craft would neither capsize nor sink. Then, recovering his balance, he sped securely on his further way.

Encouraged by our shouts of approbation, he now boldly ventured into the strong current of Jackal River, and was rapidly carried out to sea.

This being more than I had bargained for, I lost no time in giving chase in the boat, with Ernest and Jack; my wife urging us to greater speed, and declaring that some accident could not fail to happen to "that horrid soap-bubble."

We soon arrived outside the bay, at the rocks where formerly lay the wreck, and gazed in all directions for signs of the runaway.

After a time we saw, at a considerable distance, a faint puff of smoke, followed by the crack of a pistol. Upon this we fired a signal shot, which was presently answered by another, and, steering in the direction of the sound, we soon heard the boy's cheery halloo; the cajack darted from behind a point of land, and we quickly joined company. The cajack was both swift and safe!

CHAPTER XIV

TEN YEARS AFTERWARD

"We spend our years as a tale that is told," said King David.

These words recurred to me again and again as I reviewed ten years, of which the story lay chronicled in the pages of my journal.

Year followed year; chapter succeeded chapter; steadily, imperceptibly, time was passing away.

The shade of sadness cast on my mind by retrospect of this kind was dispelled by thoughts full of gratitude to God for the welfare and happiness of my beloved family during so long a period. I had cause especially to rejoice in seeing our sons advance to manhood, strengthened by early training for lives of usefulness and activity wherever their lot might fall.

Having given a detailed account of several years' residence in New Switzerland, as we liked to call our dominion, it is needless for me to continue what would exhaust the patience of the most long-suffering, by repeating monotonous narratives of exploring parties and hunting expeditions, wearisome descriptions of awkward inventions and

clumsy machines, with an endless record of discoveries more fit for the pages of an encyclopedia than a book of family history.

Yet before winding up with the concluding events, I may mention some interesting facts illustrative of our exact position at the time these took place.

Rockburg and Falconhurst continued to be our winter and summer headquarters, and improvements were added which made them more and more convenient, as well as attractive in appearance.

The farm at Woodlands flourished, and our flocks and herds supplied us with mutton, beef, and veal, while my wife's dairy was almost more than she could manage.

My boys retained their old love for giving names to the animals. They had a beautiful creamy-white cow called *Blanche*, and a bull with such a tremendous voice that he received the name of *Stentor*. Two fleet young onagers were named *Arrow* and *Dart*; and Jack had a descendant of his old favorite *Fangs*, the jackal, which he chose to call *Coco*.

Excellent health had been enjoyed by us all during these ten years, though my wife occasionally suffered from slight attacks of fever, and the boys sometimes met with little accidents.

They were all fine, handsome fellows; Fritz, now twenty-four, was of moderate height, uncommonly strong, active, muscular, and high-spirited.

Ernest, two years younger, was tall and slight;

in disposition, mild, calm, and studious; his early faults of indolence and selfishness were almost entirely overcome. He possessed refined tastes and great intellectual power.

Jack, at twenty, strongly resembled Fritz, being about his height, though more lightly built, and remarkable rather for active grace and agility than for muscular strength.

Franz, a lively youth of seventeen, had some of the qualities of each of his brothers; he possessed wit and shrewdness, but not the arch drollery of Jack.

All were honorable, God-fearing young men, dutiful and affectionate to their mother and myself, and warmly attached to each other.

But time, which was bringing our sons to manhood, was also carrying their parents onward to old age; and anxious, gloomy thoughts relating to their future, should they be left indeed alone, sometimes oppressed my heart. On such occasions, I would not communicate the sense of depression to my family, but, turning in prayer to the Almighty Father, laid my trouble before Him, with never-failing renewal of strength and hope.

My elder sons often made expeditions of which we knew nothing until their return after many hours, when any uneasiness I might have felt was dissipated by their joyous appearance, and reproof always died away on my lips.

Fritz had been absent one whole day from Rockburg, and not until evening did we remark that

his cajack was gone, and he must be out at sea.

Long we gazed across the expanse of ocean glittering in the level beams of the setting sun, and



“Welcome, Fritz! Welcome back, wherever you come from, and whatever you bring. You seem to have quite a cargo there!”

finally discerned a small black speck in the distance which, by the telescope, was proved to be the returning wanderer. The cannon was fired to let him know that his approach was observed, and

then we joyfully hurried to receive him at the harbor.

It was easy to see, as he drew near, what had delayed his progress. The cajack towed a large sack, besides being heavily laden.

"Welcome, Fritz!" I cried. "Welcome back, wherever you come from, and whatever you bring. You seem to have quite a cargo there!"

"Yes, and my trip has led to discoveries as well as booty," answered he. "Come, boys, let's carry up the things, and while I rest I will relate my adventures."

As soon as possible all assembled round him.

"I think my absence without leave deserves reproach instead of this warm reception, father, and I must apologize for it," he began. "But ever since I possessed the cajack it has been my ambition to make a voyage of discovery along the coast, going farther than we have ever yet explored.

"In order to be ready to start without delay when a convenient opportunity offered, I made preparations beforehand, such as provisioning my skiff, fixing the compass in front of my seat, arranging conveniently rifle, harpoon, ax, boat-hook, and fishing net. I also resolved to take with me Pounce, my eagle, and this I always will do in future.

"This morning dawned magnificently; the calm sea, the gentle breeze, all drew me irresistibly to the fulfilment of my purpose.

"I left the harbor unperceived, the current

quickly bore me out to sea, and I rounded the point to the left. Pursuing my way, I passed among rugged cliffs and rocks which jutted out from the shore, or rose in rugged masses from the water.

"The water beneath me was clear as crystal; and, gazing into its depths and shallows, I perceived beds of shell-fish, attached to the rocks and to each other by tufts of hairy filaments.

"'If these are oysters,' thought I, 'they must be better worth eating, as far as size goes, than our little friends in Safety Bay,' and thereupon I hooked up several clusters with my boat-hook, and landing soon after on the beach, I flung them on the sand, resolving to fetch another load, and then tow them after me in the fishing-net.

"The hot sun disagreed with their constitution, I suppose; for when I came back the shells were all gaping wide open; so I began to examine them. Somehow, when a thing is to be 'examined,' one generally needs a knife. The blade met with resistance here and there and still closer 'examination' produced several pearly balls like peas, of different sizes. Do you think they can be pearls? I have a number here in a box."

"Oh, show them to us, Fritz!" cried the boys. "What pretty shining things! and how delicately rounded, and how softly they gleam!"

"You have discovered treasure, indeed!" I exclaimed; "why, these are most beautiful pearls!

Valueless, certainly, under present circumstances; but they may prove a source of wealth, should we ever again come into contact with the civilized world. We must visit your pearl-oyster beds at the earliest opportunity."

"After resting for some time, and refreshing myself with food," pursued Fritz, "I resumed my survey of the coast, my progress somewhat impeded by the bag of shell-fish, which I drew after me; but I proceeded without accident past the mouth of the stream to the further side of the bay, which was there inclosed by a point corresponding to that through which I had entered; and between these headlands I found a line of reefs and sandbanks, with but a single channel leading out to the open sea; from which, therefore, Pearl Bay, as I named it, lies completely sheltered.

"The tide was setting strongly in shore, so that I could not then attempt a passage through it, but examined the crags of the headland, thinking I might perchance discover a second vaulted archway. I saw nothing remarkable, however, but thousands of sea fowl of every sort and kind, from the gull and sea swallow to the mighty albatross.

"My approach was evidently regarded as an invasion and trespass; for they regularly beset me, screaming and wheeling over my head, till I stood up, and hit furiously about me with the boat-hook; when, rather to my surprise, one blow struck an albatross with such force that he fell stunned into the water.

"I now once more attempted to cross the reef by the narrow channel, and happily succeeding, found myself in the open sea, and speeding homeward, joyfully saw our flag flying, and heard the welcome salute you fired."

Here ended the narrative; but next Fritz drew me aside, and confided to me a most remarkable sequel, in these words:

"There was something very extraordinary about that albatross, father. I allowed you to suppose that I left it as it fell, but in reality I raised it to the deck of the canoe, and then perceived a piece of rag wound round one of its legs. This I removed, and, to my utter astonishment, saw these English words written on it: 'Save an unfortunate Englishwoman from the smoking rock!'

"I felt stupefied for some minutes: the bird began to show signs of life, which recalled me to myself; and I tore a strip from my handkerchief, on which I traced the words—'Do not despair! Help is near!'

"This I carefully bound round one leg, replacing the rag on the other, and then applied myself to the complete restoration of the bird. It gradually revived; and after drinking a little, surprised me by suddenly rising on the wing, faltering a moment in its flight, and then rapidly disappearing from my view in a westerly direction.

"Now, father, one thought occupies me continually: will my note ever reach this Englishwoman? Shall I be able to find, and to save her?"

"My dear son," said I, "you have done wisely in confiding to me alone your most exciting discovery. Unless we know more, we must not unsettle the others by speaking of it; for it appears to me quite possible that these words were penned long ago on some distant shore, where, by this time, the unhappy stranger may have perished miserably. By the 'smoking rock' must be meant a volcano. There are none here."

After earnest consultation on the subject, we decided that Fritz should go in search of the writer of the message, but not until he had so altered the canoe as to fit it for carrying two persons, as well as provisions sufficient to admit of his absence for a considerable time. Impatient as he was, he could not but see the wisdom of this delay.

We returned to the house, and saw the boys busily opening the oysters, which they had had no time to do the previous night, and greatly excited as ever and anon a pearl was found.

"May we not establish a pearl fishery at once, father?" shouted they. "We might build a hut on the shore of the bay, and set about it regularly."

An excursion to Pearl Bay was now the event to which all thoughts turned, and for which preparations on a grand scale were made. It was to form, as it were, the basis of the more important voyage Fritz had in view, and to which, unsuspected by the rest, he could devote all his attention.

I took an opportunity, one day, when all were present, to remark in a serious tone:

"I have been considering, dear wife, that our eldest son is now of an age to be dependent on himself. I shall, therefore, henceforth leave him at liberty to act in all respects according to his own judgment; and, especially in the matter of voyages or excursions, he must not be hampered by the fear of alarming us should he choose to remain absent longer than we expect. I have such entire confidence in his prudence, and at the same time in his affection for us, that I am certain he will never needlessly cause us anxiety."

Fritz looked gratefully toward me as I spoke; and his mother ratified my words, embracing him affectionately, and saying, with emotion, "God bless and preserve thee, my boy!"

It took some time to make several raking or scraping machines, which I invented for the purpose of detaching and lifting the oysters from their native rocks; but that gave Fritz leisure to change the fittings of his canoe, so as to have a spare seat in it.

His brothers naturally concluded he meant to take one of them as shipmate on board, and he allowed the mistake to continue.

As last came the day, when, taking leave of the mother and Franz, we went on board the yacht, accompanied by some of the dogs; while Jack, proudly occupying the new seat beside Fritz in the canoe, shared with him the honor of leading the way in the character of pilots.

Fritz had not over-rated the beauty of Pearl

Bay, and the romantic islets which studded its waters seemed to give the effect of a pleasant smile to features already perfect.

We cruised about for some time, surveying the coast with its fertile meadows, shady groves, gently swelling hills, and murmuring brooks, seeking a convenient landing place in the vicinity of the shallows where lay the oyster-beds.

This we found, close to a sparkling streamlet; and, as the day was fast declining, we made speedy arrangements for burning a watch-fire; after which we partook of a hasty supper, and leaving the dogs, with Coco, the jackal, to sleep on shore, we returned on board the yacht for the night, anchoring within gunshot of the land.

We awoke at daybreak, and after breakfasting *à la fourchette*, we repaired in haste with nets, scrapers, and all other requisites, to the oyster-beds, where we worked with such diligence and success that in the course of two days we had an immense pile of shells built up like a stack on the beach, and left to decay.

I collected a quantity of sea-weed to spread over them, which was afterward burnt to make alkali, when we returned to secure our harvest of pearls.

Every evening we went out shooting in the neighborhood, and kept ourselves supplied with game of one sort or another.

The last day of our fishery arrived and it was

late in the evening before we desisted from our labors, and were preparing to retire to rest.

All at once a deep, fearful sound echoed through the neighboring woods. It made our blood curdle in our veins. We listened with straining ears, hoping it would not be repeated. With a shudder we heard the dread voice roar again, yet nearer to us, and an answer peal from the distance.

"We must find out who are the performers in this concert!" exclaimed Fritz, springing to his feet and snatching up his rifle. "Make the fire blaze; get on board the yacht, and have all the guns in readiness. I am off to reconnoiter in the canoe."

We mechanically obeyed his rapid orders, while the bold youth disappeared in the darkness; and, after heaping fuel on the fire, we went on board and armed ourselves with cutlasses, besides loading all the guns, waiting in readiness either to land again or quit the coast.

We presently saw the whole pack of our dogs, as well as Coco, the jackal, and the little ape, Mercury, come galloping at full speed up to the fire.

Mercury was evidently excessively discomposed at finding us gone; he gnashed his teeth, and chattered as though in fear, looking hopelessly at the water, through which he could not venture.

The dogs planted themselves by the fire, gazing fixedly landward, with ears erect, and occasionally uttering a barking challenge or a suppressed howl.

Meantime, the horrid roarings approached

nearer, and I concluded that a couple of leopards or panthers had been attracted by the scent of the carcass of a boar which Jack had shot. But not long after I had expressed this opinion, we beheld a large, powerful animal spring from the under-wood, and, with a bound and muttered roar, approach the fire. In a moment I recognized the unmistakable outlines of the form of a lion, though in size he far surpassed any I had ever seen exhibited in Europe.

The dogs slunk behind the fire, and the lion seated himself almost like a cat on his hind legs, glaring at them, his longing to have them for food attested by the restless movement of his tail.

He then arose, and commenced walking up and down with slow and measured pace, occasionally uttering short, angry roars, quite unlike the prolonged, full tones we had heard at first. At times he went to drink at the brook, always returning in such haste that I fully expected to see him spring.

Gradually his manner became more and more threatening; he turned toward us, crouched, and with his body at full stretch, waved his tail, and glared so furiously that I was in doubt whether to fire or retreat, when through the darkness rang the sharp crack of a rifle.

"That is Fritz!" exclaimed everyone; while, with a fearful roar, the lion sprang to his feet, stood stock still, tottered, sank on his knees, rolled over, and lay motionless on the sand.

"We are saved!" I cried; "that was a masterly

shot. The lion is struck to the heart; he will never stir again. Stay on board, boys. I must join my brave Fritz."

In a few moments I landed; the dogs met me with evident tokens of pleasure, but kept whining uneasily, and looking toward the deep darkness of the woods whence the lion had come.

This behavior made me cautious; and, seeing nothing of Fritz, I lingered by the boat, when suddenly a lioness bounded from the shadow of the trees into the light diffused by the fire.

At sight of the blazing faggots she paused, as though startled; passed with uncertain step round the outskirts of the illuminated circle; and uttered roarings, which were evidently calls to her mate, whose dead body she presently discovered.

Finding him motionless, her manner betokened the greatest concern; she touched him with her forepaws, smelt round him, and licked his bleeding wounds. Then, raising her head, she gnashed her teeth, and gave forth the most lamentable and dreadful sound I ever heard; a mingled roar and howl, which was like the expression of grief, rage, and a vow to be revenged, all in one.

Crack! Another shot: the creature's right forepaw was lamed; and the dogs, seeing me raise my gun, suddenly gathered courage, and ran forward just as I fired. My shot also wounded the lioness, but not mortally, and the most terrific combat ensued.

It was impossible to fire again, for fear of wound-

ing the dogs. The scene was fearful beyond description. Black night surrounded us; the fitful blaze of the fire shed a strange, unnatural light on the prostrate body of the huge dead lion, and on the wounded lioness, who fought desperately against the attack of the four gallant dogs; while the cries, roars, and groans of anguish and fury uttered by all the animals were enough to try the stoutest nerves.

Old Juno, staunch to the last, was foremost in the fray. After a time, I saw her change her plan of attack, and spring at the throat of the lioness; who, in an instant, raised her left paw, and at one blow the cruel claws had laid open the body of the dog, and destroyed the life of the true and faithful companion of so many years.

Just then Fritz appeared. The lioness was much weakened, and we ventured to go near enough to fire with safety to ourselves; and finally I dispatched her by plunging a hunting-knife deep in her breast.

Ernest and Jack were summoned from the yacht to witness the completed victory; and I regretted having left them on board when I saw how greatly the noise and tumult had alarmed them, unable, as they were, to ascertain what was going on.

They hastened toward us in great agitation, and their joy on seeing us safe was only equaled by the grief they felt on learning the death of Juno.

Wearied and sorrowful, but full of thankfulness for our personal safety, we at length lay down

to sleep, having brought all the dogs on board.

Next morning, before quitting Pearl Bay, we once more landed, that we might possess ourselves of the magnificent skins of the lion and lioness, whose visit, fatal to themselves, had caused such a commotion during the night. In about a couple of hours we returned to the yacht, leaving the flayed carcasses to the tender mercies of the birds of prey sure to be attracted to them.

"Homeward bound," sang out the boys, as they cheerily weighed anchor, and prepared to stand out to sea.

"You must pilot us through the channel in the reef this time, Fritz," said I; adding, in a lower tone, "and then it is to be 'farewell,' my son!"

"Yes, dear father—*Au revoir!*" returned he, brightly, with a glance full of meaning, while he threw into his canoe a cushion and a fur cloak.

We followed, carefully, and soon passed the reef; after which the boys were very busy with the sails, putting the vessel on the homeward course, when, waving his hand to me, Fritz turned in the opposite direction, and quickly vanished behind the point, which I afterwards named Cape Farewell.

When missed by his brothers, I said he had a fancy to explore more of the coast, and if he found it interesting he might, instead of only a few hours, remain absent for two or three days.

Toward evening we sailed into Safety Bay.

CHAPTER XV

THE STRANGER

Five days passed, but Fritz still remained absent. I could not conceal my anxiety, and at length determined to follow him. All were delighted at the proposal, and even the mother, when she heard that we were to sail in the pinnace, agreed to accompany us.

Our beautiful little yacht bounded over the water gaily, and the bright sunshine and delicious sea breeze put us all in the highest spirits. The entrance of the archway was in sight, and thither I was directing the boat's course. Suddenly, right ahead, I saw a dark and shadowy mass just below the surface of the water. "A sunken rock!" I thought to myself, "and yet it is strange that I never before noticed it." I put down the helm in a moment, but a catastrophe seemed inevitable.

We surged ahead! A slight shock, and all was over! The danger was passed!

I glanced astern, to look again at the dangerous spot; but the rock was gone, and, where but a moment before I had distinctly seen its great green shadow, I could now see nothing. Before we had recovered from our amazement, a shout from Jack surprised me.

"There is another," he exclaimed, "to starboard, father!"

Sure enough, there lay, apparently, another sunken rock.

"The rock is moving!" shouted Franz; and a great black body emerged from the sea, while from the upper extremity rushed a column of water, which, with a mighty noise, rose upward, and then fell like rain all around. The mystery was explained; for, as the great beast emerged yet further from the water, I recognized, from its enormous size and great length of head, the cachalot whale.

Fearful stories occurred to me of the savage temper of this whale, how he has been known to destroy boat after boat, and even ships, and with a feeling of desperation I sprang to one of the guns. Jack leaped to the other, and almost simultaneously we fired. Both shots apparently took effect; for the whale, after lashing the water violently for a few seconds, plunged beneath its surface, and disappeared. We kept a sharp lookout for him, for I was unwilling to lose such a valuable prize, and, reloading, stood toward the shore, in which direction he was apparently making. Presently we again sighted him in shallow water, lashing fearfully with his tail, and dyeing the waves around him with blood. Approaching the infuriated animal as nearly as I dared, we again fired.

The struggles of the whale seemed for a few moments to become even yet more frantic, and then,

with a quiver from head to tail, he lay motionless—dead!

The boys were about to raise the cry of victory, but checked the shout upon their very lips; for darting behind a rock they espied a canoe paddled by a tall and muscular savage, who now stood up in his skiff and appeared to be examining us attentively. Seeing that we were standing toward him, the swarthy native seized his paddle and again darted behind a rock.

Presently a dusky face appeared, peeping at us from a lofty rock; it vanished, and we saw another peeping at us from lower down. Then, again, the skiff put out as though to further reconnoiter. All, even Jack, looked anxious, and glanced at me for orders.

“Hoist a white flag,” said I, “and hand me the speaking-trumpet.”

I seized the instrument and uttered such peaceable words in the Malay language as I could recall; neither the flag nor my words seemed to produce any effect, and the savage was about to return to the shore.

Jack hereupon lost patience, and in his turn took up the trumpet.

“Come here, you black son of a gun,” he exclaimed. “Come on board and make friends, or we’ll blow you and your——”

“Stop! stop! you foolish boy,” I said; “you will but alarm the man, with your wild words and gestures.”

"No! but see," he cried, "he is paddling toward us!"

Presently a cry from Franz alarmed me. "Look! look!" he shrieked, "the villain is in Fritz's cack-jack."

Ernest alone remained unmoved. He took the speaking-trumpet:

"Fritz, ahoy!" he shouted; "welcome, old fellow!"

In another minute the brave boy was on board, and in spite of his blackened face was kissed and welcomed heartily. He was now assailed with a storm of questions from all sides: "Where had he been?" "What had kept him so long, and why had he turned blackamoor?"

"The last question," replied he, with a smile, "is the only one I will now answer; the others shall be explained when I give a full account of my adventures. Hearing guns fired, my mind was instantly filled with ideas of Malay pirates, for I never dreamed that you could be here in the yacht, so I disguised myself as you now see me, and came forth to reconnoiter. When you addressed me in Malay you only added to my terror, for it left not a doubt in my mind that you were pirates."

Having in our turn described to him our adventure with the cachalot whale, I asked him if he knew of a suitable spot for the anchorage of the yacht.

"Certainly," he replied, casting toward me a glance full of meaning; "I can lead you to an is-

land where there is a splendid anchorage, and which itself is well worth seeing, for it contains all sorts of strange things." And after removing the stains from his skin, and turning himself once more into a civilized being, he again sprang into his canoe and piloted us to a picturesque little island in the bay.

Now that there could be no doubt as to the success of Fritz's expedition, I no longer hesitated to give to my wife an account of his project, and to prepare her mind for the surprise which awaited her. She was greatly startled, as I expected, and seemed almost overcome at the idea of seeing a human being, and that being one of her own sex.

The boys could not at all understand the evident air of mystery and suppressed excitement which neither their mother, Fritz, nor I could entirely conceal. They cast glances of the greatest curiosity toward the island, and as soon as the sails were furled and the anchor dropped, they sprang eagerly ashore. In a body we followed Fritz, maintaining perfect silence. Presently we emerged from the thicket through which we were passing, and saw before us a hut of sheltering boughs, at the entrance of which burned a cheerful fire.

Into this leafy bower Fritz dived, leaving his brothers without, mute with astonishment. In another moment, he emerged, leading by the hand a slight, handsome youth, by his dress apparently a young English naval officer. The pair advanced to meet us; and Fritz, with a countenance radiant

with joy, briefly introduced his companion as Edward Montrose.

"And," he continued, looking at his mother and me, "will you not welcome him as a friend and a brother to our family circle?"

"That will we, indeed!" I exclaimed, advancing and holding out my hands to the fair young stranger. "Our wild life may have roughened our looks and manners, but it has not hardened our hearts, I trust."

From the expression made use of by Fritz I perceived that the girl wished her sex to remain unrevealed to the rest of the party until the mother could obtain for her a costume more suited to her real character.

The young men then ran down to the yacht to bring up what was necessary for supper, as well as to make preparations for a camp in which we might spend the night. This done, the mother hastened to set before us a substantial meal, while the boys, anxious to make their new acquaintance feel at home among them, were doing their best to amuse her. She herself, after the first feeling of strangeness had worn off, entered fully into all their fun; and by the time they sat down to supper was laughing and chattering as gaily as any of the rest.

The mere fact of meeting with any human being after so many years of isolation was in itself sufficient to raise the boys to the greatest state of excitement; but that this being should be one so hand-

some, so gay, so perfectly charming, seemed completely to have turned their heads; and when I gave the sign for breaking up of the feast, and their new friend was about to be led to the night quarters which had been prepared for her on board the yacht, the health of Edward Montrose was proposed, and drank in fragrant mead, amid the cheers and acclamations of all hands.

When she was gone, and silence had been restored, Jack exclaimed:

“Now, then, Fritz, if you please, just tell me where you came across this jolly fellow. Did you take your mysterious voyage in search of him, or did you meet him by chance? Out with your adventures, while we sit comfortably round the fire.”

So saying, Jack cast more wood upon the blazing pile, and throwing himself down in his usual careless fashion, prepared to listen attentively.

Fritz, after a few moments' hesitation, began:

“Perhaps you remember,” said he, “how, when I returned from my expedition in the cajack the other day, I struck down an albatross. None but my father at the time knew, however, what became of the wounded bird, or even thought more about it. Yet it was that albatross who brought me notice of the shipwrecked stranger and he, too, I determined should carry back a message, to cheer and encourage the sender.

“I first, as you know, prepared my cajack to carry two persons; and then, with a heart full of hope and trust, left you and the yacht, and, with

Pounce seated before me, made for the open sea. For several hours I paddled steadily on, till, the wind freshening, I thought it advisable to keep in nearer shore; that, should a storm arise, I might find some sheltered bay in which to weather it.

"I passed the night in my cajack; and next morning, after a frugal meal of pemmican, and a draught of water from my flask, once more ventured forth. The wind had subsided, and the sea was tolerably smooth; and, keeping my eyes busily employed in seeking in every direction to detect, if possible, the slightest trace of smoke, or other sign of human life, I paddled.

"The shades of night at length drew on, and, finding a sheltered cove, I moored my cajack, and stepped on shore. You may imagine how pleasant it was to stretch my legs, after sitting for so long in the cramped position which my cajack enforces. It would not do, however, to sleep on shore; so after preparing and enjoying my supper, I returned on board, and there spent the night.

"Next morning Pounce and I again landed for breakfast. I lit my fire, and hung before it a plump young parrot to roast. As I was so doing, I heard a slight rustle among the long grass behind me. I glanced round, and there, with glaring eyes and his great tail swaying to and fro, I saw an immense tiger.

"In another moment his spring would have been made. Pounce saw and comprehended my danger: the heroic bird darted upon my enemy, and so

blinded him with his flapping wings and the fierce blows of his beak, that his spring was checked, and I had time to recover my self-possession. I seized my gun, and fired; and the brute, pierced to the heart, gave one spring, and then rolled over at my feet.

“My enemy was dead; but beside him, alas! lay poor Pounce, crushed and lifeless. One blow of the great beast’s paw had struck him down, never to rise again!

“With a sad and desolate feeling at my heart, I buried the faithful bird where he had met his death; and then, unable longer to continue near the spot, I returned to my cajak, and leaving the great tiger lying where he fell, paddled hastily away.

“My thoughts were gloomy. The albatross, I thought, may have flown for hundreds of miles before it reached me. This stranger may be on different shores from these entirely; every stroke of my paddle may be carrying me further from the blazing signal: who knows?

“This feeling of discouragement was not, however, to be of long duration; for in a moment more a sight presented itself which banished all my doubts and fears, and raised me to the highest pitch of excitement.

“A high point of land lay before me. I rounded it, and beyond found a calm and pleasant bay, from whose curved and thickly wooded shores ran out a reef of rocks. From the point of this reef rose a

column of smoke, steadily and clearly curling upward in the calm air. With throbbing pulse and giddy brain, I seized my paddle, and strained every nerve to reach it.

"A few strokes seemed to carry me across the bay, and, securing my canoe, I leaped upon the rock, on which the beacon was blazing, but not a sign of a human being could I see. I was about to shout, for as the fire had evidently been recently piled up, I knew the stranger could not be far off; but, before I could do so, I saw a slight figure passing along the chain of rocks toward the spot on which I stood.

"I advanced a few paces; and then mastering my emotion as best I could, I said in English:

"'Welcome, fair stranger! God, in his mercy, has heard your call, and has sent me to your aid!'

"Miss Montrose came quickly forward—"

"*Who? What?*" shouted the boys, interrupting the narrative. "*Who* came forward?" and amid a general hubbub, Ernest, rising and advancing to his brother, said in his quiet way:

"I did not like to make any remark till you actually let out the secret, Fritz, but we need no longer pretend not to see through the disguise of Edward Montrose."

Fritz, though much disconcerted by the discovery of the secret, recovered his self-possession; and, after bearing with perfect equanimity the jokes with which his brothers assailed him, joined

in three cheers for their new sister, and when the confusion and laughter which ensued had subsided, continued his story:

"Miss Montrose grasped my hands warmly, and guessing from my pronunciation, I am afraid, that I was not in the habit of speaking English every day of my life, said in French:

"'Long, long have I waited since the bird returned with your message. Thank God, you have come at last!'

"Then, with tears of joy and gratitude, she led me to the shore, where she had built a hut and a safe sleeping-place, like Falconhurst on a small scale, among the branches of a tree. I was delighted with all she showed me, for indeed her hut and its fittings evinced no ordinary skill and ingenuity. Round the walls hung bows, arrows, lances, and bird-snares; while on her work-table, in boxes and cases, carved skillfully with a knife, were fish-hooks of mother-of-pearl, needles made from fish-bones, and bodkins from the beaks of birds, fishing-lines of all sorts, and knives and other tools. These latter she told me were, with a chest of wearing apparel, almost the only things washed ashore after the wreck, when three years ago she was cast alone upon this desolate coast. I marveled more and more at the wonderful way in which this girl had surmounted obstacles, the quarter of which would completely have appalled the generality of her sex. The hut itself was a marvel of skill; stout posts had been driven into the ground, with cross

pieces of bamboo to form a framework; the walls had been woven with reeds, the roof thatched with palm-leaves, and the whole plastered smoothly with clay, an open space being left in the center of the roof for a chimney to carry off the smoke of the fire.

“Before darkness closed in, all the curiosities and ingenious contrivances of the place had been displayed—the kitchen stove, cooking utensils, skin bottles, shell plates and spoons, the fishing raft and numberless other things—and then, sitting down with my fair hostess to a most appetizing meal she gave me a short account of her life:

“Jenny Montrose was the daughter of a British officer, who had served for many years in India, where she herself was born. At the early age of three years she lost her mother.

“After the death of his wife, all the colonel’s love and care was centered upon his only child; under his eye she was instructed in all the accomplishments suited to her sex; and from him she imbibed an ardent love of field sports. By the time she was seventeen, she was as much at home upon her horse in the field as in her father’s drawing room. Colonel Montrose now received orders to return home with his regiment, and as for certain reasons he did not wish her to accompany him in the ship with the troops, he obtained a passage for her on a vessel which was about to sail at the same time.

“The separation was extremely painful to both

the old soldier and his daughter, but there was no alternative. They parted, and Miss Montrose sailed in the *Dorcas* for England. A week after she had left Calcutta, a storm arose and drove the vessel far out of her course; more bad weather ensued; and at length, leaks having been sprung in all directions, the crew were obliged to take to the boats. Jenny obtained a place in one of the largest of these. After enduring the perils of the sea for many days, land was sighted; and, the other boats having disappeared, an attempt was made to land. The boat was capsized, and Miss Montrose alone reached the shore. From that time forth until I appeared she never set eyes upon a human being. To attract any passing vessel, and obtain assistance, however, she kept a beacon continually blazing at the end of the reef; and, with the same purpose in view, attached missives to the feet of any birds she could take alive in her snares. The albatross, she told me, she had kept for some time, and partially tamed; but, as it was in the habit of making long excursions on its own account, she conceived the idea of sending it also with a message, that, should it by chance be seen and taken alive, it might return with an answer.

“Our supper was over, and, at length, both wearied out with the anxieties and excitement of the day, we retired to rest, she to her leafy bower, and I to sleep in the hut below.

“Next morning, having packed her belongings in the cajak, we both went on board; and bidding

adieu to her well-known bay she took her seat before me, and I made for home.

"We should have reached Rockburg this evening had not an accident occurred to our skiff and compelled us to put in at this island. The boat was scarcely repaired when I heard your first shots. I instantly disguised myself; and, never doubting that Malay pirates were near, came forth to reconnoiter. Glad, indeed, I was to find my fears ungrounded."

All had listened attentively to Fritz's story, but now a dreadful yawn from Franz, followed by others from Jack, Ernest, and Fritz, and a great desire on my own part to follow their example, warned me that it was time to dismiss the party for the night.

Next morning as we assembled for breakfast, I took the opportunity of begging Miss Montrose no longer to attempt to continue her disguise, but to allow us to address her in her real character.

Jenny smiled; for she had noticed, as the young men met her when she came from the cabin, a great alteration in their manner, and had at once seen that her secret was guessed.

"After all," she said, "I need not be ashamed of this attire; it has been my only costume for the last three years, and in any other I should have been unable to manage all the work which during that time has been necessary."

Our pleasant meal over, I prepared to start for home, but Fritz reminded me of the cachalot, and

although he confessed he should not care to repeat the operation of cutting up a whale, he thought it would be a pity to lose such a chance of obtaining a supply of spermaceti.

I fully agreed with him; and embarking, we quickly reached the sandbank on which the monster lay. No sooner did we come near than the dogs leaped ashore, and before we could follow, rushed round to the other side of the great beast; snarling, growling, and howling ensued, and when we reached the spot we found a terrific combat going on. A troop of wolves were disputing fiercely with the dogs their right to the prey. Our appearance, however, quickly settled the matter; two of the brutes already lay dead, and those that now escaped our guns galloped off.

Fritz then climbed up the mountain of flesh, and with his hatchet quickly laid open the huge skull; Jack and Franz joined him,—Ernest having remained on the island, where we had left mother and Jenny,—and with buckets assisted him to bail out the spermaceti. The few vessels we possessed were soon full, and having stored them in the yacht, we once more embarked and arrived at the little island shortly before the dinner hour.

All was now bustle and activity. Fritz and Jack stepped into the canoe; the rest of us went aboard the yacht, and we soon left Fair Isle and Pearl Bay far behind.

The day was delightful. The sea, excepting for the slight ripple raised by the gentle breeze

wafting us homeward, was perfectly calm. Slowly and contentedly we glided on through the wonders of the splendid archway, threaded our passage among the rocks and shoals, and passed out to the open sea. So slowly did we make our way that the occupants of the cajack announced that they could not wait for us when they had once piloted us out from among the shoals and reefs, and plied paddles to such good purpose that they were soon out of sight. On reaching the entrance to our own bay, a grand salute of twelve shots welcomed us and our fair guest to Rockburg. Not pleased with the even number, however, Ernest insisted upon replying with thirteen guns, an odd number being, he declared, absolutely necessary for form's sake.

As we neared the quay, Fritz and Jack stood ready to receive us, and with true politeness handed their mother and Jenny ashore. They turned and led the way to the house through the gardens, orchards, and shrubberies which lay on the rising ground that sloped gently upward to our dwelling.

Jenny's surprise was changed to wonder as she neared the villa itself—its broad, shady balcony, its fountains sparkling in the sun, the dovecots, the pigeons wheeling above, and the bright, fresh creepers twined round the columns, delighted her. She could scarcely believe that she was still far from any civilized nation, and that she was among a family wrecked like herself upon a lonely coast.

My amazement, however, fully equaled that of my new daughter when, beneath the shade of the veranda, I saw a table laid out with a delicious luncheon. All our china, silver, and glass had been called into requisition, and was arranged upon the spotless damask cloth.

All were soon ready to sit down; and Jenny, looking prettier than ever in the dress for which she had exchanged her sailor's suit, took the place of honor between the mother and me. Ernest and Franz also seated themselves; but nothing would induce Fritz and Jack to follow their example. They considered themselves our entertainers, and waited upon us most attentively, carving the joints, filling our glasses, and changing the plates; for, as Jack declared to Miss Montrose, the servants had all run away in our absence, and, for the next day or two, perhaps we should be obliged to wait upon ourselves.

When the banquet was over, and the waiters had satisfied their appetites, they joined their brothers, and with them displayed all the wonders of Rockburg to their new sister. To the house, cave, stables, gardens, fields and boathouses, to one after the other did they lead her.

On the following day, after an early breakfast, we started, while it was yet cool, for Falconhurst; and as I knew that repairs and arrangements for the coming winter would be necessary, and would detain us for several days, we took with us a supply



Jenny looked prettier than ever in the dress for which she had exchanged her sailor's suit.

of tools, as well as baskets of provisions, and other things essential to our comfort.

When the repairs were all finished, we remained yet a day or two longer, that we might make excursions in various directions to bring in poultry from Woodlands, stores of acorns for the pigs, and grass, willows, and canes, to be manufactured during the winter into mats, baskets, hurdles, and hencoops.

Many a shower wetted us through during these days, and we had scarcely time to hurry back to Rockburg and house our cattle and possessions before the annual deluge began.

Never before had this dreary season seemed so short and pleasant; with Jenny among us, the usual feeling of weariness and discontent never appeared; the English language was quickly acquired by all hands, Fritz in particular speaking it so well that Jenny declared she could scarcely believe he was not an Englishman.

CHAPTER XVI

THE ENGLISH BRIG

Many wondrous tales were told or read in turn by the boys and Jenny during the long evenings as we sat drawing, weaving, and plaiting in our cozy study. In fact this winter was a truly happy time, and when at length the rain ceased and the bright sun again smiled upon the face of nature, we could scarcely believe, as we stepped forth and once more felt the balmy breath of spring, that for so many weeks we had been prisoners within our rocky walls.

All was once more activity and life; the duties in field, garden, and orchard called forth the energy of the lads, while their mother and sister found abundant occupation in the poultry yard and house.

Our various settlements and stations required attention. Falconhurst, Woodlands, Prospect Hill, Shark and Whale Islands were in turn visited and set in order. The duty of attending to the island battery fell to Jack and Franz. They had been busy all day repairing the flagstaff, rehoisting the flag, and cleaning and putting into working order the two guns.

Evening was drawing on and our day's work over, the rest of us were strolling up and down upon the beach, enjoying the cool sea breeze. They loaded and ran out their guns, and paddling off with an empty tub in the cajack, placed it out at sea as a mark for practice. They returned and fired, and the barrel flew in pieces, and then, with a shout of triumph, they cleaned the guns and ran them in.

Scarcely had they done so when, as though in answer to their shots, came the sound of three guns booming across the water from the westward.

We stopped, speechless. Was it fancy? Had we really heard guns from a strange ship? Or had the boys again fired? No! there were the lads leaping into their canoe and paddling in hot haste toward us. They, too, had heard the sound.

A tumult of feelings rushed over us—anxiety, joy, hope, doubt, each in turn took possession of our minds. Was it a European vessel close upon our shores, and were we about to be linked once more to civilized life? Or did those sounds proceed from a Malay pirate, who would rob and murder us?

Before we could express these thoughts in words the cajack had touched the shore, and Jack and Franz were among us.

"Did you hear them?" they gasped. "What shall we do? Where shall we go?"

Few slept that night. The boys and I took it in turn to keep watch from the veranda, lest more signals might be fired, or a hostile visit might be

paid us. But about midnight the wind began to rise, and for two days and two nights the hurricane continued, but on the third day the sun again appeared, and, the wind lulling, the sea went rapidly down. Full of anxiety, I readily complied with the boys' desire to put off to Shark Island and discharge the guns. One—two—we fired the guns and waited.

For some minutes there was no reply, and then an answering report rolled in the distance. There was no longer room for doubt; the strangers were still in the vicinity, and were aware of our presence.

Fritz and I at once prepared to make a reconnaissance; we armed ourselves with our guns, pistols, and cutlasses, took a spyglass, seated ourselves in the cajack, and with a parting entreaty from the mother to be cautious, paddled out of the bay and round the high cliffs on our left. For nearly an hour we advanced in the direction from which the reports of the guns seemed to proceed. Then in a moment all our doubts were dispelled, and joy and gratitude to the Great Giver of all good filled our hearts. There, in the little sheltered cove beyond the cape, her sails furled, and anchor dropped, lay a brig of war with the English colors at her masthead.

"I can see the captain, father! He is speaking to one of the officers, and I can see his face quite well; he is English, I am certain he is English, and the flag speaks the truth!" and Fritz put the glass

again in my hand that I might see for myself. For some minutes longer we continued our examination of the scene, and then, satisfied by the appearance of a camp on shore that there was no chance of the brig quitting the coast for several days, we resolved to return without betraying our presence, for I was unwilling to appear before these strangers until we could do so in better form, and in a manner more in accordance with our actual resources.

The rest of the day was occupied in making our preparations. Our dainty little craft was made to look her very best; her decks were scrubbed, her brass guns burnished, all lumber removed and put ashore, and the flag of England hoisted to her peak. The mother overhauled our wardrobes, and the neatest uniforms were put ready for us.

At the break of that eventful morn, we assembled in our little breakfast room. The meal was eaten hurriedly and almost in silence, for our hearts were too full, and our minds too busily occupied, to allow of any outward display of excitement. Fritz and Jack then slipped quietly out, and presently returned from the garden with baskets of the choicest fruits in fresh and fragrant profusion, and with these as presents for the strangers, we went on board our yacht.

The anchor was weighed, the sails set, and with the canoe in tow the little vessel, as though partaking of our hopes and joyous expectation, bounded merrily over the waters, and, to the surprise and utter amazement of the strangers, we

rounded the point and brought up within hail. Every eye on board and on shore was turned toward us, every glass was produced and fixed upon our motions.

Fritz and I stepped into our boat and pulled for the brig. In another minute we were upon her deck. The captain, with the simple frankness of a British seaman, welcomed us cordially, and having led us into his cabin, begged us to explain to what good fortune he owed a visit from residents upon a coast generally deemed uninhabited, or the abode of the fiercest savages.

I gave him an outline of the history of the wreck, and of our sojourn upon these shores, and spoke to him, too, of Miss Montrose, and of the providential way in which we had been the means of rescuing her from her lonely position.

"Then," said the gallant officer, rising and grasping Fritz by the hand, "let me heartily thank you in my own name, and in that of Colonel Montrose; for it was the hope of finding some trace of that brave girl that led me to these shores. The disappearance of the *Dorcas* has been a terrible blow to the colonel, and yet, though for three years no word of her or of any of those who sailed in her has reached England, he has never entirely abandoned all hope of again hearing of his daughter. I knew this, and a few weeks ago, when I was about to leave Sydney for the Cape, I found three men who declared themselves survivors of the *Dorcas* and said that their boat, of four which left the

wreck, was the only one which, to their knowledge, reached land in safety. From them I learned all particulars, and applying for permission to cruise in these latitudes, I sailed in hopes of finding further traces of the unfortunate crew. My efforts have been rewarded by unlooked-for success."

One of the officers was now quickly dispatched to the yacht with a polite message, and the mother, Jenny, and the boys were presently on board.

Our kind host greeted them most warmly, and he and his officers vied with one another in doing us honor. They proved, indeed, most pleasant entertainers, and the time passed rapidly away. At luncheon the captain told us that there had sailed with him from Sydney an invalid gentleman, Mr. Wolston, his wife, and two daughters; that Mr. Wolston had suffered so greatly from the effects of the storm, which had driven the *Unicorn* into the bay for repairs, that he had been eager to rest for a short time on land.

That night I had a long and serious consultation with my wife, as to whether or not we really had any well grounded reason for wishing to return to Europe. My dear wife assured me that she desired nothing more earnestly than to spend the rest of her days in a place to which she had become so much attached, provided I and at least two of her sons also wished to remain.

From the other two she would willingly part, if they chose to return to Europe, with the understanding that they must endeavor to send out

emigrants of a good class to join us, and form a prosperous colony, adding that she thought the island ought to continue to bear the name of our native country, even if inhabited in future time by colonists from England, as well as from Switzerland.

I heartily approved of this excellent idea, and we agreed to mention it, while consulting with Captain Littlestone on the subject of placing the island under the protection of Great Britain.

After breakfast, it was proposed that Captain Littlestone should bring his ship round to Safety Bay, that we might receive a visit from him and his party, at Rockburg—where we invited the invalid, Mr. Wolston, and his family, in hopes that his health might benefit by a comfortable residence on shore.

No sooner was this plan adopted than Fritz and Jack hurried off in the canoe to prepare for their reception, being followed in more leisurely style by the brig and our yacht.

But what words can express the amazement of our guests, when, rounding the Rocky Cape at the entrance of Safety Bay, the beautiful domain of Rockburg lay before them.

Still greater was their astonishment as a salute of eleven guns boomed from the battery on Shark Island, where the royal standard of England was displayed and floated majestically on the morning breeze. A glow of surprise and pleasure beamed on every countenance, and poor Wolston's spirits ap-

peared to revive with the very idea of peace and happiness to be enjoyed in such a home. He was carried on shore with the utmost care and tenderness, and comfortably established in my room.

Meantime the scene at the harbor and all round Rockburg was of the liveliest description; merriment and excitement prevailed in all directions, as the beauties and wonders of our residence were explored, so that a summons to dinner scarcely attracted notice.

Toward evening the universal excitement began to abate, and the party assembled for supper with tolerable composure.

Mr. Wolston was able to join us, as the rest he had enjoyed, and the pleasure inspired by the hope of a residence among us, seemed to have given him new life. This wish he now distinctly expressed in his own name, and in that of his wife; inquiring what our intentions were, and proposing, if agreeable to us, that they, with their eldest daughter, whose health, like his own, was delicate, should make a long stay on the island, while the younger daughter went for the present to her brother at the Cape of Good Hope.

In the event of his ultimately deciding to settle altogether among us, Mr. Wolston would propose that his son should leave the Cape, and join our colony. With sincere satisfaction I welcomed this proposal, saying that it was my wish and that of my wife to remain for the rest of our days in New Switzerland.

"Hurrah for New Switzerland!"

"New Switzerland forever!" shouted the whole company enthusiastically.

"Prosperity to New Switzerland; long may she flourish!" echoed on all sides.

"Won't somebody wish long life and prosperity to those who go away?" inquired Jenny, with a pretty, arch look. "Much as I long to return to England and my father, my inclination will waver if all the cheers are for New Switzerland!"

"Three cheers for England and Colonel Montrose," cried Fritz; "success and happiness to us who return to Europe!" and while the vaulted roofs rang with the cheering elicited by this toast, a glance from Jenny showed him how much she thanked him for appreciating her wish to return to her father, notwithstanding her attachment to our family.

"Well," said I, when silence was restored, "since Fritz resolves to go to England, he must undertake for me the duty of bringing happiness to a mourning father by restoring to him this dear daughter, whom I have been ready to regard as my own, by right of her being cast on the shores of my island.

"Ernest chooses to remain with me. His mother and I rejoice heartily in this decision, and promise him all the highest scientific appointments in our power to bestow.

"And now what is Jack's choice? The only talent I can say he possesses is that of a comic

actor, and to shine on the stage he must needs go to Europe."

"Jack is not going to Europe, however," was his reply. "He means to stay here, and when Fritz is gone he will be the best rider and the best shot in New Switzerland, which is the summit of his ambition. The fact is," he continued, laughing, "I rather stand in awe of their European schools, and should expect to find myself caught and clapped into one if I ventured too near them."

"A good school is exactly what I want," said Franz. "Among a number of students there is some emulation and enthusiasm, and I shall have a chance of rising in the world. Fritz will probably return here some day; but it might be well for one member of the family to go home with the intention of remaining there altogether, and as I am the youngest I could more easily than the rest adapt myself to a different life. My father, however, will decide for me."

"You may go, my dear son," I replied; "and God bless all our plans and resolutions. The whole earth is the Lord's, and where, as in his sight, you lead good and useful lives, there is your home. And now the only question is whether Captain Littlestone will kindly enable you to carry out your wishes?"

All eyes were fixed eagerly upon him, and after a moment's pause the gallant officer spoke as follows:

"My orders were to search for a shipwrecked

crew. Survivors from two wrecks have been discovered. Three passengers express a wish to leave my ship here, instead of at the Cape, while, at the same time, I am requested to give to three persons a passage to England. Could anything suit better? I am most willing to undertake the charge of those who may be committed to my care.

“Every circumstance has been wonderfully ordered and linked together by Divine Providence, and if England gains a prosperous and happy colony, it will prove a fitting clasp to this fortunate chain of events. Three cheers for New Switzerland!”

After this nothing was thought of but making preparations for the departure of the dear ones bound for England. Captain Littlestone allowed as much time as he could spare; but it was necessarily short, so that incessant movement and industry pervaded the settlement for several days.

Everything was provided and packed up that could in any way add to our children's comfort on the voyage, or benefit them after their arrival in England, and a large share of my possessions in pearls, corals, furs, spices, and other valuables would enable them to take a good position in the world of commerce.

I committed to their care private papers, money, and jewels which I knew to have been the personal property of the captain of our ill-fated ship, desiring them to hand them over, if possible, to his heirs. A short account of the wreck, with the names of

the crew, a list of which I had found, was given to Captain Littlestone.

Fritz, having previously made known to me what indeed was very evident, the attachment between himself and Jenny, I advised him to mention it to Colonel Montrose as soon as possible after being introduced to him, and ask for his sanction to their engagement. I gladly bestowed mine, as did his mother, who loved the sweet girl dearly, and heartily grieved to part with her.

On the evening before our separation, I gave to Fritz the journal in which, ever since the shipwreck, I had chronicled the events of our life, desiring that the story might be printed and published.

"It was written, as you well know," said I, "for the instruction and amusement of my children, but it is very possible that it may be useful to other young people, more especially to boys."

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Night has closed around me.

For the last time my united family slumbers beneath my care.

To-morrow this closing chapter of my journal will pass into the hands of my eldest son.

From afar I greet thee, Europe!

I greet thee, dear old Switzerland!

Like thee, may New Switzerland flourish and prosper—good, happy, and free!

CHILDREN'S BAPTIST HOME
OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

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